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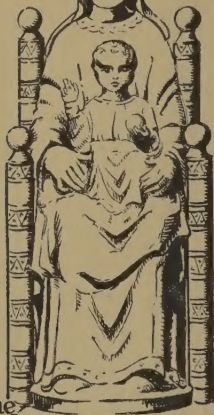
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for Sister Isabelle

from

Leonard & Adah Van Koppin

We can never forget Notre Dame.

Lt Leonard Van Koppin, asst Naval Att

30 Grosvenor Gardens S.W.1,
London

THE CHALLENGE

of President

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame,

Ind.

THE CHALLENGE

WAR CHANTS OF THE ALLIES—
WISE AND OTHERWISE

3912

BY

LEONARD VAN NIPPEN

LIEUT. U.S.N.R.



LONDON

ELKIN MATHEWS, CORK STREET

1918

Dedicated
TO
JOSEPHUS DANIELS
AND
LORD NORTHCLIFFE

A61

C4

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16018

(1)

THE CHALLENGE

UPON this age, to Honour, dead and cold,
O Poet, breathe thy spirit. Let the warm
White flame of prophecy and the wild charm
Of simple music make thee stern and bold.
We need the eagle's passion and the old
Heroic anger—need the Titan's arm
And tongues like ringing trumpets to alarm
Our sleeping gods, lulled with a lie of gold.

It is not peace is needed, but a sword !
It is not peace. Against the kings of wrong
Hurl singing armies with such power of song
That their proud walls shall topple, and the strong
Be strong no more ! Yea, with sublime accord
Challenge the world, ye prophets of the Lord !

1612 NAT

SAINT

of CROSS, INDIA

(2)

THE GERMAN'S SECRET SHAME

I'LL dip my pen into my heart, and write
A flaming screed whose characters are men.
Yet not all hell if it became a pen
Could now depict the anguish of this Night ;
Not all the devils that the lost affright,
Not all the demons in the deepest den
Could vie with Prussia in her fury when
She quenched the Beautiful with Belgium's light.

Age after age shall slowly pass away
But that black crime shall stand and larger loom ;
Distance shall make it nearer and the day
Shall but increase its horror and its gloom.
For ever and for ever shall their name
Haunt every German like a secret shame.

(3)

THE CENSUS-TAKER

To Commander Royce

THE census-taker of the Lord of Hosts
Once met Old Lucifer, the Prince of Hell,
Who begged that angel, solemnly, to tell
If any Germans entered with those ghosts
That came in multitudes from Europe's coasts.
If any, then how many ? For ther' fell
To his own share some millions, glad to dwell
With him in Tophet. Hearing his loud boasts,
The angel sighed, and only shook his head ;
And when the Devil pressed him to reply,
With a most knowing smile the other said :
" Upon my word, for angels do not lie,
Though just returned from Heaven, this I'll swear,
There never yet was one damned German there."

(4)

THE WAR-GROG

To Captain Roger Welles

FOR many years was Prussia on probation.
We trusted her, yet now it is well known
She had a tap-room right beneath the throne,
Where Wilhelm served the war-grog to the nation.
And as each year they doubled their potation,
They did not think, with learning over-blown,
How they who tippie overmuch alone
Soon topple from the tip of reputation.

And when they were well seasoned, ripe and mellow,
Each mother's son of them began to bellow
For instant war. To right and left they hacked,
Blustering loudly that they were attacked—
And so they were—by rabies. To mad dogs
We saw transformed a race of pedagogues !

(5)

ENGLAND

To Lady Colleen

ENGLAND, the home of poetry ; the hearth
Where the world's heart so often warmed its hands ;
Whose soul none but her Shakespeare understands ;
Whose singing is a silence round the earth ;
Cradle of Law, where Freedom had its birth ;
The grave of tyrants ; winging her commands
Over the oceans ; envy of all lands,
Jealous of none, yet worshipful of worth :

England, the acorn, whence to ages sprang
The oak of empire ; eagle whose safe wings
Mother her brood of colonies ; where rings
No chain of slave ; O England, for the clang
And clash of battle, gird thy loins, and wage
War with the Dark for thy rich heritage.

(6)

NEVER !

To Hon. Walter Page

AND shall they bring proud England to her knees,
She who has knelt unto her God alone ?
Shall she bow down before the Kaiser's throne
With " Ave Cæsar " ? Shall she live to please
The tyrant with submission, laugh and sneeze
When he commands her, cringe and grovel and groan
Before the master, and his lordship own,
While of her servitude he makes his ease ?

Never to such shall England bend the knee ;
Never as long as England has one arm,
One sword, shall she surrender. Never while
England is England, though the hells alarm ;
Never while she, upon her maiden isle,
Fights with her back against a wall of sea.

(7)

THE SOUL OF CELLULOID

THE Kaiser has a soul of celluloid
Which makes it easier for him, at night,
To clean his conscience and to leave it white.
For he cannot afford to be annoyed
By memories of villages destroyed
And other doings, such as the mad bite
Of his sea-dogs, the submarines. Since might
Is always right, this keeps his spirits buoyed,
So nothing mars his soul of celluloid.
But don't suppose the Devil is annoyed,
For celluloid will burn. When it is chill,
Of all the tyrants that, now grim with grime,
Once giggled on the whirligig of time,
The Kaiser's soul will sizzle on the grill.

(8) THE KAISER'S DREAM

THE Kaiser dreamed. He'd had a pleasant day :
News of a glorious victory, reports
Of taken cities and surrendered forts,
Of children slain while in their sleep they lay,
And other pleasantries. A splendid day !
And as he dreamed, he stood in starry courts
Grandeur by far than were his own resorts,
While one bowed down before him, old and grey.

The air was expectation : angels trembled
And all the chiefs of Heaven were assembled ;
And to the kneeling One the Kaiser said,
" I praise Thee God for millions of the dead,
Receive the Iron Cross." He heard a civil
" Thanks," and awoke before the grinning Devil.

(9) ALBERT OF FLANDERS

To Judge Ben Lindsay

ALBERT of Flanders, Hero, who art King
Of Heroes ; who, when set his kingdom's sun,
Rose like a star, and by his daring won
Out of its woe the world to wondering.—
Thy fame from darkness like the eagle's wing,
Exulting, soared, while horribly the Hun
Gloated above her beauty, and began
The ruin which is Belgium. Seraphs sing
Thy praise with rapture, and their voices swell
From sweet to sweeter till their chantings rise
Up to His Throne who is of Justice Lord.
Thou King, unkingdomed, King yet of thy sword,
Hast shown to men, how from the night of hell
One name can lift a nation to the skies.

To President Wilson

FOR peace alone, America, do we
Ask thee for armies, for enduring peace ;
That so thy dead and wounded may decrease
The crime of war ; and that, as thou art free,
Even so, at last, may other nations be.
Only through battle may red battle cease ;
Only the dying hero can release
The living slave, and give him liberty.

Rather to die in battle than to sit,
A vegetating parasite, at home.
They are but cowards, when the cause is just,
Who lag behind. And since the war has come,
Rise in thy might, America, and pit
Thy soul against this hydra-headed lust.

To Willy Hohenzollern

I DREAMED I was in Hell, and saw unrolled
The panorama of the pains of men.
Each special devil of each special den
Wreaked his own will and punished, and behold :
The dark was cloven with a wedge of gold :
Europe, with all its armies, battling men
And flaming cities, stood revealed and then
Satan, the emperor of Hell, grew cold,
Seeing that other emperor who hurled
A fiercer hell upon a darker world.
Great sorrows loomed upon him and great wrongs,
Throned on the throbbing of a million throngs.
Outdone, he shook and bowed his ancient pride,
Cast down his sceptre, fell, and moaning died.

(12)

THE ETERNAL BATTLE

To Alice Meynell

I DREAMT I rode a cannon-ball to Hell.
Thereon I sat, the god of my own world.
Speed wove me wings of whirling that upcurled ;
And after me the constellations fell
Down the dark night and vanished. Could I tell
Of what I saw when, like a meteor whirled,
I passed the gate, and Time his pinions furl'd,—
Then earth would War and all its works expel !

Words are too weak, and yet one daring word
Will try to speak that Vision of the Sword.
For on the plains, infernal, red with gore,
Were fought eternal battles ; and they slew,
The men that fought there, those whom best they knew :
Each with himself waged war for evermore.

(13)

THE LAND OF BELLS

To Queen Elisabeth of Belgium

BELGIUM, that land of many joyful bells ;
With cities beautiful, and houses quaint
With pictured gables ; country, like a saint
Surprised at vespers ; clime where Nature dwells
With Art, her daughter ; where no poet sells
His soul for gold ; where painters loved to paint
With coloured music ; kingdom, with no taint
Of reasoned cowardice ; whose glory swells

Into a harmony of tint and tone,
Stronger than empires where she fights alone,
Welding her present to the precious past
With strokes of iron, braving to the last
The breath of cannon, when, O Belgium, when
Shall I, who listen, hear thy bells again !

To the Belgians

THERE shall be made a crown : For her who stands,
 Crownless in grief, there shall be made a crown.
 And there shall be a sound of trumpets blown
 And jubilation and triumph, when the bands
 Of holy Brightnesses, with happy hands,
 Shall bring her in, where, seated on His Throne,
 The King of kings shall make His favour known
 By crowning her, the Rachel of the Lands,

The Queen of Fame. And there shall be for her,
 Who suffered much, the joy of swaying myrrh :
 Nations of song shall keep alive her name ;
 And her dear dead, commingling in one flame,
 Shall flush upon an altar into rose,
 While from the harps a wind of music blows.

CIRCUMSTANCE

HAD Cleopatra's nose—you know the rest,
 So take the scent and follow : Had the Kaiser
 Been born less arrogant, and therefore wiser,
 He never had—Alas ! this is not jest—
 Trained his moustache, till it so well expressed
 His swelling ego that each idolizer,
 Of course, must imitate the pompous Kaiser
 And so began to boast and puff his chest.

And hence the war. That ego-centric horde
 Could never rest till it had won the world.
 For forty years, they strutted, clanked the sword
 And threatened ; then their empire madly hurled
 Against the breast of Belgium. So the point
 Of one moustache put Europe out of joint.

(16)

THE KAISER'S ALIBI

BEFORE the God he never knew, he kneeled,
Who had not knelt before. It was the Lord
Of Truth, not he, the wielder of the sword.
From Belgian bells an accusation pealed,
And one red vision to his soul revealed
The ruin which his unforgotten word
Dashed like a flame on Flanders. And the Lord
Waited his answer. Then the one who kneeled
Said, " Lord, I am not guilty of this thing
For I can prove I have an alibi."
There was a pause, the while the trembling king
Felt every eye was like a piercing sting.
Then, from their graves, millions, with one great cry,
Leaped to their feet, and answered him, " You lie."

(17)

EDITH CAVELL

To her Mother

CAVELL, that name which rings within our ears
As musical as any vesper bell ;
Voice, that once soothed the soldier where he fell,
Dear hand, that lulled to silence his last fears.
Sweet Saint of England, canonized with tears,
Whose soul was plucked from that red Prussian hell
And set with the immortals, there to dwell
Where praising peace the angels are thy peers.

O Maid of England, with the Maid of France,
Paired in the happy calendar of chance,
Edith, our own saint Edith, worshipped now,
Beautiful blossom on the highest bough
Tossed by the war-wind to the sky, thy fame
For evermore shall be the German's shame.

(18)

"COME, ALL YE LIVING"

To Thomas Hardy

COME, all ye living, camp against the dead.
Go forth and give them battle who have sold
The future into bondage. All too bold
Are their unseen battalions, and the dread
Of their long silence like a night of lead
Weighs down our music. Break each ancient mould
Of barren custom where the soul grows cold,
Break and destroy the empire of the dead.

Let never trumpet sound the happy truce
Till they are dust, abolished, every one,
Who keep the world in chains of darkness. Loose
The lark of hope that suffers for the sun,
And fill the sky with singing. Slay, oh, slay
The tyrant Past, and wake, for it is Day!

(19)

DEUTSCHLAND ÜBER ALLES!

ONCE in a conclave of the lords of Hell,
Of a young soul, with bulging cerebellum,
And a sly conscience that like slipper "ellum"
Tripped up the truth so that he might excel
In lying, while a solemn silence fell,
The Devil, as he paged a tome of vellum,
Said to his own what long he'd meant to tell 'em:
"Of this my son much glory I foretell:

"Devil at large at once I here appoint him,
Wilhelm, his name, and king I now anoint him.
Behold in him the triumph of atrocity."
As down the dark, with great velocity,
That hero vanished, from the Stygian Palace
Burst the wild strains of "Deutschland Über Alles!"

(20)

THE CHRIST OF NATIONS

To Laurence Binyon

GOD's angels at the casement ! There are seven,
Alert for vision, who keep vigil, burning
Their lamps of saving, while, with bosoms yearning,
They lean towards Earth ; where, it is breathed in Heaven,
Christ dies again. From early dawn to even,
And all night long, they watch there, never turning
Their eyes within, their wonted splendours spurning
To face the darkness, that around bright Heaven
Roars like a sea, till, with a myriad moan,
Music from grandeur shivers to a groan.
But lo ! one seraph with a cross of light
Points down to Belgium crimsoning the air—
The slain Christ of the Nations ! Like a prayer
Her chanted Name makes beautiful the Night !

(21)

MARTYRDOM

To Lord Morley of Blackburn

THE earth cries loud for blood ; for never grew
One saving truth, amid the human stress,
That withered not in barren loneliness
Till watered by the sacrificial dew.
Red are the prophets ; see how Athens slew
Her mortal sage for his immortal guess :
A thousand Golgothas to God confess
The cross, the cry, and oh, the crimson hue !

Through cloud and whirlwind, agony and flame,
Man goes to God, a glory round his head :
Someone must bleed or else the world will die !
O ye, who dare the shadow and the shame,
Red is the road to freedom. With our dead
We build the steps of life into the sky !

(22)

ES IST VERBOTEN

“ THE State is God,” said Hegel ; and his word
Became a world in which no man may pass
Without beholding, here, “ Keep off the grass ”
And, there, “ Es ist verboten,” which that lord
Of many laws, whose symbol is the sword,
Hangs on each tree and corner for the mass,
Until, each man, like an unthinking ass,
Now right, now left, is shunted by a board.

The state is God ? Say rather 'tis the Devil,
Since it would rob each German of his soul,
If he had soul to lose. Their good is evil
Who of world empire now have made their goal.
When Prussians try to ape the French acumen,
It's like an ape pretending to be human.

(23)

THE CONCLAVE

HEAVEN held a council. All the wise and great
Among God's angels and archangels came ;
And their white wings were tipped with rosy flame.
And as they sat, grave, earnest and sedate
In solemn conclave, they deliberate
Upon his doom, their prisoner, whose name
They dared but whisper, since it reeked of shame,
And he, the while, trembled to know his fate.

Said the Accuser, with as little grace
As when the Prussian slew the Flemish race,
“ His soul is mine, to feed eternal fires,”
But God replied “ No, for that king of liars
Hell is too good by far ; so, for his sin,
I'll send this Kaiser back to his Berlin.”

(24) "MILTON! THOU SHOULDST BE LIVING"

To Rt. Hon. Arthur J. Balfour

MILTON! Thou shouldst be living at this hour,
And thou too, Wordsworth! Now that England needs
The Man of Words as well as men of deeds;
Words to arouse the lion of her power,
Words to uplift us while the tempests lower.
Words, living words, to chant like holy creeds
At battle altars, where your country bleeds,
Such would ye give, in this her darkest hour.

And one would thrill us with the trumpet sound,
Waking the hero sleeping in each heart;
The other brood and prophesy apart,
Healing with Hope the spirit's aching wound:
Thus England would know glory, and again
Believe in God through her new Faith in men.

(25) THE DRUNKARD

To His Infernal Majesty, the Devil

AGE-WEARIED Europe, that old roué, raised
A precious cup that sparkled to the rim
With youth's live wine; and having sipped the brim,
With a mad yell that blowsy drunkard, crazed,
Dashed it into dead fragments, while, amazed,
The world looked on, and wondered at a whim
So reckless and so wanton. With a hymn
Some stopped to pick the pieces up, while, dazed,
That doddering profligate down to the floor
Crumpled and fell into a craven heap,
Mumbling and cursing; then began to weep,
Maudlin with memories, and then to snore.
Next day when he was sober he was dead,
And over him a hurried prayer was said.

(26)

TEARS IN HELL

Now are there tears in Hell, yes, bitter tears.
Attila weeps because he is outdone,
And he must lose, and give that other one
His crown of cruelty. Afar he hears
The shrieks of myriads, and a vision nears
Of tortures terrible, on earth begun,
To place the Slavic Prussian in the sun,
And as he gnashes envy he bleeds tears.

And yet for him is solace ; for his dreams
Are drunk with Belgium's agony, and screams
Pierce his long night of lovers in their pain.
And he is lost in wonder to behold
Rising, one red, while even Hell runs cold,
From plains of sleep, the mountains of the slain.

(27)

THE CROWNING INFAMY

MERCY, O God, and has it come to this,
That now the Prussian, as the papers tell,
Will foist on Brussels—since he can compel—
His dismal architecture, brought from Dis,
That city of the Devil, with a hiss.
Shall those Barbarians, who but excel
In monumental murder, who with shell
Battered the cities thrilling with the kiss,
The long last kiss of Art, before she died,—
Wonderful Art, sad Belgium's happy bride—
Shall they, the butchers of the beautiful,
Dazed before Memling, and to Rubens dull,
Now perpetrate this last iniquity ?
Spare us, O God, this crowning infamy.

To Rudyard Kipling

MILLIONS of dead and dying, millions more,
Wounded and mangled, and a world of wives—
Widowed for what? To drag their dreaded lives
Through miles of misery. And seas of gore,
Shed by those cultured madmen thirsting for
The empire of the world. And all the hives
Of human industry, and all that thrives
In field or forest, driven to restore
The cult of Attila; which, now misnamed,
Is known as kultur, evermore defamed
By deeds that devils would not dare to do,
Murder and massacre on earth and sea;
And where alone the avid eagle flew
Battles in air, and horrors yet to be.

To John Masefield

TO-MORROW, ah, to-morrow! What shalt thou,
Veiled daughter of thy Mother called "To-day,"
Bring in thy hands of fortune or dismay?
Shalt thou come with the laurel on thy brow
Or with a crown of thorns? Shalt thou endow
Eternity with some heroic lay,
Or like a stern avenger come to slay?
Unveil thy face. For thou art poisoning now,
In thy sure hand, a dart that shall send death
To thousands in the instant of a breath;
Or a great Day thou grandly dost prepare
Where patience shall behold the fruit of prayer.
Song shall be heard, or seen return of sorrow:
So moves the world in silence towards To-morrow.

To Admiral Sir Reginald Hall

Is England sick ? If so, she needs a tonic.
 What shall it be ? A year or two at sea
 Might do her good. To this we all agree,
 Yet there are some who, with a smile sardonic,
 Prescribe a bitter remedy, Teutonic ;
 But Englishmen reject this recipe.
 So man the boats, and as we take to sea
 Answer with broadsides that may sound ironic :

“ Tonic is good ; Teutonic is too much ;
 For that involves such violence and such
 Horrors unspeakable that we prefer
 To be just English than a race of fiends.
 We cannot cope with you in massacre ;
 We leave that to the Devil and his friends.”

To Admiral Sims

A NEUTRAL he, who, neither up nor down,
 Hangs like the even scales. What you expound
 Back to his indecision will redound ;
 What should be done he always will postpone.
 Of equilibrium he makes a throne,
 Who will from action evermore rebound.
 Weighed in the balance, shall his soul be found
 Wanting in every crisis, and be shown
 Light as a feather. Neither fish nor fowl,
 Nor lamb nor lion, eagle, dove nor owl,
 What then is he, who never can decide
 Save for delay ? Now by his voice and hide
 And what he lacks, I think that he will pass,
 To sum it up, for a consummate ass.

(32) "BURN UP THE WORLD"

To Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith

BURN up the world, and yet that living spark
Which once was England would for ever shine
And be a star. It would be as a sign
Hung in the silent forehead of the dark,
A light for them who listen and cry "Hark!"
Hoping for hope. And to the holy shrine
Of her dear name, by dying made divine,
Would come the pilgrim ages. Like an ark
Would float her memory upon the flood
Of Cosmic change. Great deeds would enter there:
Deeds of great daring, consecrate with blood,
Immortal fames and grandeurs, words sublime
That like strong eagles soared above despair,
And thoughts beyond the highest reach of Time.

(33) GER—MANIA

WHAT is Ger-mania? A madness seen
But in Germaniacs. It is to will
To own the world; to ravage and to kill,
Because commanded by a cold machine.
It is with feigned necessity to screen
The lust of savages; to spy, and spill
Oceans of blood; a fury to fulfil
Orders that mercy may not intervene.

It is to be efficient to destroy
Beauty and peace, to blot virginity;
To be so "bloodyhard" that no alloy
Can soften and no massacre can cloy.
It is to arrogate divinity,
And ape all things save asininity.

(34) "THERE IS A STRENGTH IN ENGLAND"

To His Majesty King George

THERE is a strength in England, which, from sleep,
If once awakened, will to slay and rend,
Spring like a lion. Bristling to defend
The fords of danger, she shall never weep,
But laugh sublimely on the very heap
Of her disasters. No defeat shall bend
Her iron rectitude who shall not end
But live unconquered, one resolved to keep
Her soul, her land, her language and her name.
All that is holy in the word of home,
So dear and tender to the hearts that roam,
She shall preserve inviolate. No shame
Shall tarnish her. And though the German come,
Yet shall he not remember that he came.

(35)

THE EMPIRE

To General Smuts

A MULTI-COLOURED army with one tongue ;
An empire, many-colonied, whose heart
Hath but one beat, one hope, one love—that art
To keep the soul alive ;—and one glad song,
Sung by a throbbing, million-throated throng,
With but one step, each singing his own part
In the harmonious whole ; and school and mart
Emptied of multitudes to right a wrong :

Such now I see in England. Her wise past
Hath made her present wiser. To her need,
Sprang from their labours myriads of her seed ;
And they will follow her unto the last,
Their mother, whose great heart is now become
The stirring music of the forward drum.

(36)

COMPARISONS

Put the moustachèd Kaiser by the side
 Of that sweet Christ who once for all men died :
 One hard and pompous ; and the other meek,
 With looks of pity : One whose fingers sleek
 His ruffled arrogance, a figure of pride,
 Triumphed on blood and trampling on the weak ;
 The other triumphless, with eyes that seek
 The lost for saving, scourged and crucified.

Or just with Lincoln's once his face compare :
 One to bring hope ; the other, but despair :
 One with a countenance of woven thought
 Where greatness of humility is wrought ;
 The other, throned, and bellowing his laws,
 A man of consequence, with little cause !

(37)

RETRIBUTION

To Secretary of War Baker

FORGIVE us, God, our sins are armies. All
 That now we suffer of death and woe and pain
 Is our own punishment, who have for gain
 Sold our own souls. Now comes the upward call
 To hut and cottage and ancestral hall,
 And they must expiate who have no stain
 The crimes of others till no guilt remain.
 Someone must suffer else the world shall fall.

So hath America, in anger, wroth
 With the avowed ambition of the Goth,
 For peace her universal flag unfurled.
 For righteousness she seized the righteous sword,
 For honour and the glory of the Lord.
 Her answer is the conscience of the world.

To General Pershing

VICTOR is he who conquers by defeat.
Only through failure can we know success ;
And we have failed. Now at the dark we beat
With unavailing agony. Unless
Help comes from Him in whom all help is found,
We are undone. But now I hear a sound
Of many crying with a joyful cry :
" America ! " and I behold from war
Heroes returning. Riding on her car,
Columbia, the virginal, on high,
Holds up the banner of triumph, and the sky
Is rent with salvos of acclaim ; and far,
In the young East, above the morning star,
The sun of freedom dazzles every eye.

THE KAISER'S SOUL

ALL were convened : the Devil, in the chair,
Called Hell to order as became the Head ;
And then to Lucifer one demon said :
I have it from one present—" Sire, I bear !
The soul of the great Kaiser as your share."'
And as the Prince of Liars, of the dead,
Saw but a tiny microscopic shred
Hanging in silence from a single hair,
He like a serpent hissed unto his own :
" I with this Kaiser thought to pick a bone,
But hunger spurns this fly-speck of a soul ;
So lest it leave the Devil in a hole,
I'll strain a point till may be, by-and-by,
His ego serve to dot the i in lie."

THE PED-ANTS

LIKE ants that in the tropics go to war,
 Marshalled in armies, which no wall can thwart ;
 As they consume, armed with destruction's art,
 Palace and cottage and all things that are
 Prey to their fury ; which, though with no scar,
 Leave but the shell behind, and eat the heart,
 And silently upon their path depart,
 Marching resistless, to devour and mar ;

So have the Ped-ants of the Prussian state
 Left of that Empire nothing but a shell ;
 Its soul is gone, philosophized to Hell,
 And where its heart was is a void of hate.
 Though seeming fair, their pomp and boasted power,
 Crumbling, shall fall before the Marching Hour !

THE SEA-MEW

As from a sea of silence, in one night,
 Emerged this miracle of German Power,
 This black volcano bursting into light,
 Vomiting death, crowned with a crimson flower,
 Rooted in Hell, whence rains a fiery shower
 Over the nations, that, in wild affright,
 Flee from that spreading ruin, whose red blight
 Shall haunt the earth until its dying hour.

And when at last is spent the Prussian ire,
 And that volcano swallows its own fire,
 And broods on its own ashes, there shall be
 Only a lifeless cone ; and Memory
 Shall like a screaming sea-mew ever fly
 Around that lonely crag with mournful cry.

(42)

THE MURDERER OF LOUVAIN

STILLED with suspense, all Hell lay like a sea.
It gleamed afar, a sheet of molten gold.
Vast shadows menaced ; not a billow rolled.
Pain, struggling at its fetters, terribly
Strained, locked in soundless anguish. None could flee
His agony ; and in that burning cold
There was no voice, no whisper, but untold
Visions of torture, till into that sea
Of stillness, throbbing with its prisoned pain,
Plunged like a red-hot meteor, the dead
Soul of the murderer of fair Louvain.
And Hell from silence seethed into a hiss,
As he, whose name filled all the earth with dread,
Burst like a bubble in the last Abyss.

(43)

FRANCE

To General Joffre

LIEGE has fallen, and deafening alarms
Sweep like the whirlwind through peace-loving France.
And she whose soul is wonder, wont to dance,
Thunders defiance, as she springs to arms.
Although to her a hurricane of harms
Threaten disaster, to the Goth's advance
Stands like a wall, impassable, all France,
Warding her shrines, her cities and her farms.

Now at the Marne she proves a very lion
And from the German eagle plucks his prey.
Her heroes shine like stars in great Orion,
And Joffre is like the sun of a new Day.
No more is heard the " On to Paris " cry ;
" On to Berlin," the million-voiced reply.

(44)

THE NEW FRANCE

To M. Clemenceau

NOT gay more, and no longer debonair,
Are now that people once so light of heart ;
Yet theirs is not the sadness of despair,
But stern resolve of each to do his part,
To do his best, and this to do is art.
From every eye an eagle flames to dare,
And each, the common danger, proud to share,
Now proves himself a hero. For a dart
Rankles in every bosom. Better far
For the whole race to perish in this war
Than to live on and languish in the night.
Blow, bugles, blow, and let the banners dance,
As radiant armies, singing as they fight,
Lift up the lilies of immortal France.

(45)

MADE IN GERMANY

OF late the Prussian scientists devised
For every lack a substitute so good
That hunger feasted on that plenitude.
And every day the people they surprised
With some renowned invention, authorized
To be as pure as nature, so that wood
Was by their formula transformed to food,
And this was proof that they are civilized.

And their philosophers, of learning proud,
They also triumphed, when for Prussian needs,
Their arts produced a new synthetic god ;
Who, made in Germany, the world deceived.
Until this god proved, by his cruel deeds,
It was the Devil in whom that race believed.

(46)

“WHO DIES FOR FRANCE”

To President Poincaré

Who dies for France dies happy. Is there joy
Equal to his, who, for the land he loves,
For her green fields, her cities and her groves,
Dies in his happy spring-time ! Man and boy,
Woman and girl, find their supreme employ
In dying for their country : some, like doves,
Torn by the Prussian eagle ; some in droves,
Fearfully slaughtered. But who shall destroy
That nation where the very children yearn
To sacrifice their little lives, and burn
Upon the common altar ! Heroes all,
The French stand firmly as a granite wall,
France is one man, and freedom is the cry,
Freedom to face, unconquered, the free sky.

(47)

“REVENGE, O FRANCE”

To General Foch

REVENGE, O France, revenge ! This feud is old,
Twixt Gaul and Goth ; and often have they fought
On plains of honour and the fields of thought,
But never fought as now, when for thy gold,
And for thy lands and language, with one bold
Dash at thy heart, those sons of darkness wrought
Ruin and woe, unspeakable, and sought
Within their coils thy country to enfold.

But they have found the keepers at the gate,
When, with one thrust and one deep thrill of hate,
All France hurled back their millions to that Hell
Where only Germans are content to dwell :
And when again comes that barbaric horde,
Give every Goth to the devouring sword !

THERE was tumult in the deeps of Hell,
Murmur of devils, with no serpent missing,
When the red soul of one they called Von Bissing
Entered from death. With lifted crests that swell,
Green with their venom, asps and adders, hissing,
Clamoured of Lucifer that he expel
That Prussian murderer of Nurse Cavèll ;
And in that hissing of his name, Von Bissing
Crept out of Hell into the outer cold
And shivered into darkness. There his shade
Wanders for ever, fated to behold
The horror of a deed that will not fade.
Hissed out of Hell, beyond all hope of Heaven,
He haunts the Void, a spectre unforgiven !

WHO would not weep as he, who, while she slept,
For Peace prepared the dagger. Yet a smile
Gleamed through his tears, revealing his deep guile,
As on his victim innocent he crept.
For this assassin, though a skilled adept,
Would weep as weeps the sunning crocodile,
Sure of its prey, along the river Nile ;
And as he did the horrid deed, he wept.

And it is well that he is used to weep ;
For he shall soon have need of other tears,
When he shall waken from his drunken sleep
To find, while gradually his vision clears,
His kingdom gone—beholding, with a groan,
Hell was the power that stood behind the throne !

(50)

"CAN ANY HELL?"

CAN any Hell with German war compare?
Can the Inferno of the maddest Devil
Or the imaginings of imps of evil
Vie with this seething cauldron of despair,
This den of wildest denizens, this lair
Of nameless passions, which the cold and civil
Speech of the diplomat, that pondered drivell,
Loosed on the world to roar and rage and tear?

Ask them who saw the deluge. Ask their eyes
That stare for ever at dear Belgium's blood.
Ask them who waded through the battle flood
In Serbia, Russia, Poland. Hear their cries
Like souls in torture. For an hundred years
Europe shall weep the ocean of her tears.

(51)

"SHALL WE GIVE PEACE?"

SHALL we give peace to them who gave a sword?
Shall we give peace? O Belgium, ask thy dead;
Ask of the mothers of the sons that bled;
Ask of their fathers. With what hopeless word
Shall they reply? How answer? With what word
Shall they be satisfied whose blood hath fed
The bloated Prussian, with his hydra head
And but one brain—the devil's. Be there heard
Of counsellors no feeble talk of peace,
Until that monster, which, with venom breath,
Poisoned the wells of honour, lies in death.
Not till that universal menace dies,
Not till he perishes with all his lies,
Can there be peace, for Belgium happy peace.

(52)

GETHSEMANE !

To Sir William Watson

GETHSEMANE ! O watchers, in the night,
Keeping Faith's lonely vigil, never may
Your eyes behold the beauty of the day,
And the return of the receding light.
No hope shall, like a brother, young and bright,
Lead you to dawn from darkness. Watch and pray ;
For they are bought already who betray ;
And dolefully, above your dead delight,
The owl sobs like an oracle of doom,
Presaging that all glory shall be gloom.
Then drink the cup, so dreadful now to see ;
To the last drop of sorrow, drink and drain.
To-morrow comes to lead through ways of pain
To Golgotha from your Gethsemane.

(53)

BEER OR WINE ?

If I am asked this conflict to define,
I'll answer you, like any sonneteer,
In fourteen lines, and say that it is clear
It is the beer at war against the wine.
A simple matter, truly, when you dine,
To take of both ; but not so now, I fear,
For them whose blood is only German beer,
Nor easier for them whose blood is wine.

Shall it be beer or wine ? That is the issue
Now to be settled by your blood or mine.
If you choose one the other side will hiss you,
The while your own shall clap and hug and kiss you,
Shall it be wine or beer ? Hops or the vine ?
Prussia or France ? Here's mine then to the wine !

To Sir Edward Grey

THE voice of Britain, borne by every wind,
Called to her sons, who answered to her "come,"
Like self-forgetting heroes. None was dumb,
But with the golden singing out of Ind
Mingled Australia's gladness. Not behind,
A score of other colonies were come :
Africa's legions laughing to be home,
And hosts from Canada ; and who were blind
Found eyes to see in London. East and West
Trooped to that Midway concourse of the Best.
Where now, embattled, fortified in her isle,
The mother and her children meet the test,
As with his plots of labyrinthine guile
The bitter Teuton braves the British smile.

THEY are surprised, who, with their greedy eyes,
After the plots of forty plotting years,
After the toasts of forty billion beers,
Looked on our England as a lawful prize.
With their own fears they lash us, and chastise
With their own tears our laughter. In our cheers
The triumph of the Prussian disappears.
They are surprised that we have kept the prize.

How could they know who are the Lord's elect
The Devil would from danger save his own ?
How know that Britain's colonies would be
Loyal to love, the pillars of her throne ?
How know she would surprise them—how expect
A landslide from the level-sleeping sea ?

WHEN Prussians do a dark and bloody thing,
They plead necessity, as devils do
When, false to truth, they to themselves are true.
Experts are they from every wrong to wring
The show of right, who after murder sing
So lustily you'd think they found the clue
To a clear conscience in that crimson hue
Which stains them from the peasant to the king.

Who to these singers would impute such wrong
As that they would do murder, who indeed
Accuse them of red massacre and greed ?
Before God's Throne stands an accusing throng,
Ready to prove, while worlds hang in suspense,
How they are innocent—of innocence.

THEY came together there, from East and West :
Philosophers and generals and all
The Prussian statesmen, at their Kaiser's call—
Came to devise, or subtly to suggest,
Some philosophic method to arrest
The swift advance of Liberty : " The Gaul,
The Belgian and the Britisher must fall,
Before the German, of all men the best,
Can rule supreme." This was the wise conclusion
Of this great conclave, after some confusion :
" Since we have need of operations base,
Let Hell become our base of operations,
Whence we shall launch upon the lesser nations
The gentle learning of the German race."

(62)

THE QUESTION

" SHALL we have God or not ? " Some who were there
Voted to lay the question on the table ;
And others, the philosophers, most able,
Stood for repeal ; some clamoured, to declare,
They, to decide, would never turn a hair ;
For, after all, this God was but a fable.
But their great Kaiser, then, arrayed in sable,
Pounded the gavel, and from out the Chair
Gave righteous reasons for retaining God.
And all agreed his reasoning was saner,
But disagreed about the right retainer ;
So they concluded with this pious fraud :
That only " God " could give such dignity
As would conceal their mad malignity.

(63)

THE STAMPEDE

As on the plains American, would sweep
Herd after herd of buffaloes until
That rugged horde, uncountable, would fill
The level vast with myriads soon to heap
The river valleys to the very steep
Of the broad mesas ; as they roll their will
With million-footed thunders down some hill,
Whence plunging like an avalanche they leap
Over the silent prairie, by that host
Trampled to tremblings ; so the German hordes,
In their mad onset to the Belgian coast,
Armies with guns and cavalries with swords
Rolled on unendingly, to overawe
With might of arms the majesty of Law.

THE SUBMARINE

UNDER the peace of undulating waves,
Wait, poisoning war, assassins, with their lance,
The dread torpedo, in the hand of chance ;
And as the submarine a victim craves,
She comes, all unsuspecting. Now the knaves,
Ambushed in waters, launch the bolt, and dance
Around their prey, unseeing, who, in trance,
From their warm beds plunge into shivering graves.

Then all is silence. The forgetting deep
Basks in the morning like a shark asleep,
Yet not more satisfied is she than they
Who robbed a thousand innocents of breath.
For they are German pirates, mad to slay,
Who glut their maw with massacre and death.

THE *LUSITANIA*

GRACEFULLY gliding on the sea's smooth floor,
The *Lusitania* dances as her bands
Peal merrily her laughter to the lands,
That lean unto her coming, while before,
Like messengers of hope, with whirling soar,
A flock of sea-birds beckons to the strands,
And all is peace ; and then just when the hands
Of each fond heart can almost touch the shore,
A muffled thunder, and then a shriek, and down
The Titan sinks in silence. Gnashing jaws,
The sea becomes a shark ; and now the waves—
A seething whirlpool, troubled by what cause ?—
Yawn for their victims, and are sudden graves :
And death is satisfied to keep his own.

THE golden bloom of Prussia's growing power
Now perfect like a dandelion stands,
And the full globe awaits the victor's hands
To pluck it for the triumph of an hour.
The German plot has ripened, to what shower
And to what warmth the Devil understands ;
And there is sound of singing in the lands
Whose Kaiser bends to take that precious flower.

And as he stoops low as the rim of Hell
To grasp that coveted, imperial prize,
The dying breath of all the dead that fell
Blows like a wind, and scatters through the skies
Like fragile mist that unsubstantial bloom :
Gone like a ghost, it leaves an empty doom.

TWIRLING his proud moustachios, with a chip
Lying upon his shoulder, to and fro,
The Kaiser strutted, swearing with one blow
To blot out England, men and every ship.
Over his slaves he cracked the master's whip,
To see them grovel and cringe ; and row on row,
As for a tip, which they would not forgo,
That race of waiters bowed unto the hip.
And he commanded them to be but Huns,
And they were as he bade them ; and those churls,
Drilled by that martinet, with swords or guns,
March with a goose-step, while their leader whirls
The baton pompously ; and then all run,
Dying to take their places in the sun.

(68) "MAN, PROUD OF LEARNING"

MAN, proud of learning, builded a machine,
And called it system ; perfect in each part,
He crowned it with his wonder. In the mart
It brought great profit, and was praised when seen.
Void of emotion, still it stood between
His eyes and beauty ; for he lacked the art
To give that creature, passionless, a heart.
It had no soul, which he had not foreseen.

And he called God to witness, wishing praise,
The glory of his handiwork ; and God
Was wroth with him, and after many days
That thing of mind, yet soulless as a clod,
Turning on its creator, wild with greed,
Slew him who fashioned it to serve his need.

(69) BISMARCK

BISMARCK, that man of blood and iron, who,
Forger of telegrams, in secret, played
For the high stakes of empire, and who laid
Upon the specious sands, though strong to view,
The frail foundations of a state, delayed,
Which now, top-heavy with its crimes, and weighed
In a just balance, crumbles ; Scourger, who
Left France defenceless, crimsoned with a hue,
Remembered ; lord of lofty brow, obeyed,
Whereon, as on a crag, that brooding eagle,
Ambition, hatched vain kingdoms and those vain
New robber kings, more arrogant than regal.
Nothing but vanity did he attain,
Nothing but dust ; who, after life's red revel,
Came to himself when he went to the devil.

(70) "WAS IT THY SINS, O WORLD ? "

Was it thy sins, O World, that from the womb
Of pregnant Hell delivered, to affright,
This brood of terrors, progeny of night ?
Was it thy sins that brought on us this doom ?
For the whole earth is now become a tomb ;
And like a leper, loathsome in the light,
Man cries " Unclean ! unclean ! " and from the sight
Of the glad day creeps furtive through the gloom.

Was it thy sins, O World ? Then for thy guilt
The innocent do suffer ; for the mild
Feed the ferocious hunger of the wild.
The roses perish, and the lilies wilt,
While the rank weeds of privilege survive,
Where, drunk with blood, inhuman monsters thrive.

(71) SEND DOWN THY WRATH, O GOD

DESTROY the wicked, and their works consume.
Send down Thy wrath, O God, and with one flame
Burn up the proud. Oh, cover them with shame,
Who, on earth's poor and little ones, this gloom
Sent without pity. Earth is but a tomb
Where we who live lay them without a name,
Not knowing if their faces be the same
We loved so well in their unsullied bloom.

One ghost walks through the chambers of each mind,
One lonely ghost that never can be stilled.
Nothing is fair ; our tears have made us blind.
The world we knew and loved is gone, and killed
Are all the singing birds that loved to nest
In the serene recesses of the breast.

(72) "WHY ARE THEY SILENT?"

WHY are they silent? why, O Belgium, why
Are they so still, thy carillons, those chimes,
That with their melody in other times
Ravished the ear, and bore the senses high
Over the world, till lost as in the sky
Of its own wonder, lulled to dreamy climes,
The soul was hushed to peace while earth's loud crimes,
By music stilled, died gently to a sigh?

Why are they silent? Shall they not be dumb,
Who have nor hope nor joy, but only shame?
How should they sing who saw the Vandals come
Trampling to death all beauty, treading down
A thousand years of history, as town,
Castle and palace thundered into flame?

(73) FORTISSIMI SUNT BELGAE!

"FORTISSIMI sunt Belgae," words, I read
When but a child, in that near long ago
Before the Modern Man had learned to know
His heart a jungle where all beasts are bred
Which rend and ravage, famishing for red.
How could we guess and by what art foreknow
That history would prove a passing show
Where all things are repeated? Heart and Head
Are now the wilderness wherein make lair
Lions and tigers. Serpent lies are there,
And wolves of passion snarl in packs within.
Ages are rhythms that find their rhymes in sin.
Nothing is new: "Fortissimi!" the cry,
As once again the deathless Belgians die!

BE a machine, a war-machine, and make
Of love the slave of slayers. Pair, and breed
A human brood to glut the Battle's greed ;
Bear babies by the millions for his sake.
Only their blood, which cost your own, can slake
His burning thirst. O war-brides, hear and heed
The cry for more. Bear children just to feed
This roaring monster. With his ruddy rake,
Behind the passing of the dread machine,
Death, he, the silent one, is glad to glean,
And he is loth one lovely form to spare ;
For he loves beauty and the shine of hair.
Bear babies for his gleanings. Breed and haste ;
For war will not forgive them who are chaste.

To the German Militarists

A CRY—a child is born, and he shall be
Fattened for sacrifice upon the field,
Of babes, the womb has made a fertile yield,
And War, the Moloch, rubs his hands with glee.
For, after twenty years, the world shall see
What, to blindfold its mothers, now is sealed.
Would they bear babes who saw them march afield
By millions to the death which men decree
Who know not woman's labour ? Would they bear
Food for the hunger of cannon, they who dare
Death in the house ? Aye, would they furnish sons
To glut the famine of a million guns ?
Yet, come what may, the mothers must prepare
Food for the feast, and Death must have his share.

THE MOTHER

LOVE for a moment, and nine months of labour ;
And then a child, my own, to nurse and rear
To tender hopes set in a wall of fear,
Then boy him into manhood, with a sabre,
Clanking his side, the while, with trump and tabor,
He goes to mimic battle. Then a year
Of patriotic schooling till my dear
Marches away to war to kill his neighbour.

And then the end. The killer has been killed,
And not yet twenty, with his heart unthrilled.
A far-off grave, unwept, beneath some willow
That mothers lovingly that lonely mound—
The grave of one whose name was never found
Save by the moan upon a midnight pillow.

THE SACRIFICE

" Now go to sleep ; it was a dream," she said,
" But, Nurse, I see them, rising from the ground,
Armies on armies, coming with a sound,
As of the voices of a million dead ;
Now all are rushing, with a roar of red,
Into the West, that bleeds as from a wound,
Where a black cross looms ghostly from a mound."
" It was a dream, now go to sleep," she said;

" Look, Nurse, I see a hundred thousand hands,
That wave like flags a forest of wild brands,
Flaming that monstrous cross, where hangs, on high,
My Mother, Christ ! her blood is all the sky !
My Mother ! " " Also theirs, now sleep," she said ;
And then he slept the slumber of the dead.

(82)

FORGIVE US ALL, O FATHER

WE pray unto a Silence. From the sky,
To us, in anguish and in nakedness,
Who nothing have but weakness for a dress,
There comes no answer to our bitter cry ;
No comfort comes. O God, Thou art so high,
And we so low, who, in our weariness,
Remember Thou hast promised to be nigh.
Help us, O Lord, Thy children, in distress.

Forget that we forgot Thee in our pride,
When we bowed down unto a god of gold.
Hear us, we pray, who in the shadows hide.
Forget, O Judge, Thy justice. Be not just ;
Be merciful, for we are but as dust ;
Forgive us all, O Father, young and old.

(83)

THE PRUSSIAN SWINE

As when the swine plunged down the Gadarene,
By raving demons suddenly possessed,
And so were drowned together, to attest
The power of holiness on things unclean ;
So shall another wonder soon be seen
When these mad Prussians that the world infest,
By Hohenzollern frenzies long obsessed,
Shall in a fury of infernal spleen
Dash into darkness. For the Lord of Truth
Is wroth with them, that nation without ruth,
And He shall slay. One motion of His hand
Shall exorcise the devil of unrest,
And rend the Kaiser ; and at his command
The evil spirit sink the Prussian pest.

LIKE growling mongrels, fighting for a bone,
 Are now the nations, which, a year before,
 So sleek and smooth, unto each other bore
 Words of goodwill and friendship. Now no stone
 Were hard enough to shatter. Throne at throne,
 Army at army, batters ; and the door
 Of Hell bursts open, as with more on more
 Millions surge in, while Heaven with a moan
 Hungers for souls in vain. For how can they
 Who shed God's blood enter into that place,
 Where all of love is centred in His Face
 Who is of mercy Lord ? How would they live
 With Him, the Giver of all life, who slay
 Christ in the men He suffered to forgive ?

" God ! God ! " and always " God ! " Oh, little word,
 Big with hypocrisy, which justifies
 Wrong and injustice, and resorts to lies,
 Whereof each crucifies again that Lord,
 Worshipped as Christ. Around the world is heard
 The frenzy of His followers who rise
 To pluck the God of Mercy from the skies,
 And on His Throne have set a flaming sword.

Unto the silence of a cross of flame,
 They nailed the cry of His Incarnate Name ;
 And crowned His brow with crimson. Pale and stark,
 His body hangs, and horrifies the dark.
 And once again in agony He cries,
 " Father, forgive them ! " and for ever dies.

GOD woke, for He had slept an hundred years.
He had grown weary of the good men do,
And fled to dreams, to hear of something new.
But now He woke. Before Him, wreathed in leers,
Stood His old foe, the Devil ; and his jeers
Shattered the peace of Heaven, which now grew
Into the look of Hell, and angels flew
Into wild shapes, with covered eyes and ears.

And He who loomed upon the Living Throne
Now wore a face most terrible, the Face
Of God's own creature, Man ; and a deep moan
Burst from God's heart, and as He died the place
Became as earth, and myriad cannon roared
Over His death who once had reigned as Lord.

SEEING the war, Imagination died.
Drowning in seas of dreadfulness, his gaze
Was on the world, now crimson with the craze
Of such a strife the very Devil cried
Because out-devilled by mere men. Denied,
God left His earth to perish, and a haze
As of the mists of death arose, and ways
Opened to Hell. But, proud of his own pride,
Man saw but man, and wist not of these things,
Too occupied with emptiness, too vain
Of his own vanities ; and there were kings
That offered God, like hecatombs, the slain,
Then all the dead gathered to one great throne ;
And no one lived save Death, who ruled alone !

"THE EYES THAT CLOSED"

THE eyes that closed when martyred Belgium fell
Are lights set in the windows of despair.
They shall shine hope to others, walled in care,
And beam their beauty into very hell.
Eyes of defiance, which no fear could quell ;
Oh, loving eyes and gentle, which could dare
Darkness and death, now, in the upper air,
Great is the glory which your glances tell !

For they have opened on the bright abodes,
From out whose doors of music-ringing gold
Come harping angels singing happy odes.
And, welcoming, with sterner voice and bold,
All the old heroes, for their deeds renowned,
Join in that joyousness, and swell the sound.

(89) THE DEATH OF BELGIUM'S FLOWER

Now ye, who set the man against the mass,
And march against a many-armed power,
Go forth, as when, in Sparta's darkest hour,
Leonidas, the Persian, at the pass,
Met, with sublimest daring ; which, alas,
Was quenched in darkness as a mighty shower
Puts out a torch. Even so dies Belgium's flower,
Man after man. Whom none on earth surpass
Die overwhelmed by oceans of mad men,
Pouring from plain and forest. Every den
Gives up its denizen, and from deep hell
Wave after wave of onset swells, and rolls
Billows of battle over Flemish souls.
But Belgium's spirit shall they never quell.

NIETZSCHE, thou fang, whence flowed that poison forth
Which seethes like a black venom in the veins
Of German learning, now thy standard reigns
Over that nation, which, from south to north,
Metes in the measure of thy soul all worth.
Added with thy philosophy, their brains
Hatch only serpents that, from Prussian plains,
Swarming in armies, cover sea and earth.

Now Christ with Antichrist is locked in strife :
Christ the meek God-Man seen opposing pity
Unto this Superman who spares no city,
Crushing the nations with contempt of life.
And once again the Darkness and the Light
Grapple and sway in agonizing fight.

(91) THE DESCENT OF THE HOHENZOLLERN

It was a stair I saw. It reached to Heaven,
Mounting, it seemed, millions of miles in air ;
And every step of that upsoaring stair
Was a dead man or woman, and the levin
Played round one form that climbed thereon to Heaven.
I could but glimpse his face, whose brow and hair
Were hidden by a crown. He had no care
Of them he stepped upon, who, white as driven
Snow, glistened in the all-revealing levin.
And still, for ages, step by step, he climbed.
Till he, at last, while Belgian carols chimed,
Stood face to face with God in His own Heaven.
But ere his feet were free of that white stair,
It fell, and dashed his soul through endless air !

(92) WHAT WOULD THEY DO TO U.S.?

IF not the prattle of the babes you slew,
Nor thought of wife or mother could restrain
The beast within you, gloating on the pain
Of Belgium in her agony ; if you,
From persecution of the living few
And of the many dead, cannot refrain,
Sparing no torture if thereby you gain
The land you covet, and its soul subdue,
What then would you, O Prussians, do to us
Who will not bend ; who, stubborn, unelastic,
To Prussian tactlessness would not be plastic ?
What you have done to Belgium, even thus
Would you do to America ; yea, worse,
If once subjected to the German curse.

(93) MAN, THE MECHANISM

WHY call on God ? Ye, who your Lord denied,
Call on your idol, gold, to help and save
Men from the madness of themselves. The grave
Swallows your grandeur, and your stiffened pride,
Unstubborned, is as water. That ye lied,
Saying there is no God, O ye, so brave,
Your hearts bear throbbing witness, since ye crave
Some consolation for your sons that died.

But you must expiate with blood and tears
Your grievous sin of making but machines
Of human bodies with their hopes and fears.
Humanity is greater than its means.
Man is no mere automaton that moves
At the caprice of biologic loves.

" BETTER, I think, with Belgium to begin,"
The Kaiser said. But when his troops embraced
Liege, the maiden-breasted, cold and chaste,
She found the German iron was but tin.
Mass after mass battered against that thin
Array of heroes. Death is there, and waste ;
And what is beautiful has long since graced
The triumph of the ugly in Berlin.

And now the clamour of a world gone mad,
Slaughter and violence, while cities crash,
Crumbling to ruin, and forget their names ;
And children calling for the love they had :
Army with army grapples and the clash
Of battling nations in the glare of flames.

" ADIEU, mes enfants," their brave captain said.
" Adieu ! " they thundered with full-throated cry,
Three thousand men, who felt it sweet to die
For France and freedom. That they might not shed
Their blood was bitter. They had saved its red
For war's sublimest rapture. But the sky,
Above the billows where their bodies lie,
Is bluer ; and where they together said
Their last farewell, arrayed in battle line,
The wind is richer, wafting to la France
The glory of that moment, which shall shine
The brightest of the pages of Romance.
Attention, France ! Facing the Southern Blue,
Salute the dead, and echo their " Adieu ! "

O YE, who died before ye knew what end
Should crown your glorious striving, ye, who died
Before the victory, unsatisfied ;
Whose countless names in death for ever blend
Into one blur, the while your souls ascend
Like incense from red altars ; ye, who cried
Your " Vive la France ! " and lion-like defied
Hell to its face, courageous to defend
Your native land, when, roaring from the East,
Sprang forth to rend, the armies of the Beast,
O ye who died too early for the sun,
Too soon to see the triumph ye have won,
To you the glory. To her nameless dead
A new France bares with reverence her head

WHEN future ages shall of heroes tell,
Silence shall come upon them who would sing
The deeds of Serbia. Her noble king
And countless heroes then shall overswell
Into the sweetness of a tear, and dwell
Within the heart a moment till the ring
Of their loved names in joyous annaling
Pells out their triumphs like a silver beli.

For they have triumphed, who, forsaken, lone
With backs against the granite of despair,
Fought to the bitter end an empire's might ;
Who, when to them the world was deaf as stone,
Flung the live torch of their tremendous dare
Into death's yawn, and made the darkness light.

A CROSS, surmounted with his cap who died,
A nameless cross upon a nameless grave ;
One empty boot, the silent cross beside ;
The other, ah ! he left it to the slave
Who took it, when—the leg they could not save.
Yet for the nameless one some heart hath cried
That knew his name. Not knowing how he died,
Someone, somewhere, weeps for her soldier brave.

When will he come ? Some heart for ever cries,
And in the window at the fall of night
A hand sets lovingly the welcome light
For him, who, entering the singing skies,
Found on the lips of angels his lost name,
Lifted by music to the top of fame.

To him who died at Gelrode, faithful priest,
One out of many sent to narrow doom,
So that the Hun, to breathe, might have more room ;
To Father Joseph, slaughtered, like a beast,
For his white crime of mercy to the least
Of his dear flock ; to that loved shepherd, whom
His desecrating judges gave no tomb,
Finding his bitter agonies a feast
Sweet to the Prussian palate ; to that saint,
Beaten by devils, tortured and defiled,
In life revered and in his death reviled,—
To him, thy dearest martyr, without taint,
Appeal, O Belgium, for thy vengeance ; pray
That Christ forgive them who thy children slay !

(108)

CARDINAL MERCIER

IN Belgium's tempest, standing like an oak,
With the wild fury beating on his head
Of the vast Prussian wrath, his accents pled
For mercy, as became his name. Through smoke
And fire and agony, the Shepherd spoke,
But was not heard. The world around was red,
The sun reeled in the Heavens, and the dead
Defied the living, yet he spurned the yoke
Of gilded ease, and challenged without cease
The bloody murderers of smiling peace.
Anathema, that Prophet of the Lord
Hurled on their heads, whose desecrating hands
Had rent the Holy of Holies. Like a sword
His pastoral swept flaming through the lands.

(109)

ON THE MASSACRE OF THE ARMENIANS

RIVERS of blood, they, for religion, shed,
Rivers of tears. Not harder are the stones
Than were their hearts who revelled in their groans,
And feasted on the vision of that red.
The world was dumb, and not a word was said ;
No staying hand was lifted, but like drones
The nations drowsed ; and long their dying moans
Dreadfully sounded till the very dead,
While slept the living in that sluggard sleep,
Stirred in their graves. And over the wide deep
One might have trumpeted such words of power
As would have cowed the tyrant on his throne ;
One might have spoken, who, from hour to hour,
Proved that his power was only to postpone.

HE lost his hand, even as he worked the gun.
The earth was red around him, and there fell
Out of the sky a shrill-exploding shell
That for a moment, blotting out the sun,
Stunned him. No thought had he that day to shun
The death that rained from out that German hell,
But stood resolved, like all the rest, to sell
His life not cheaply, swearing not to run
Before that onset, where against all France
The armies of all Germany advance.
Dreadful that conflict in that gulf of flame.
When all was over, he said, half in shame :
" When I, to France, like others of our band,
Offered my life ; she took, instead, my hand."

JUST " Mac," I called him ; and the little duffer
Had a queer way of whistling with abandon
Now " Tipperary," then the " Bells of Shandon."
It was rough work. He could not see me suffer
With my old wound, and saying he was tougher
And had no dignity at all to stand on,
He did my part, and as he put his hand on
The gun to shoot, he acted as a buffer,
And took the shot which else had blown away
My leg, as it did his. And did he pray ?
Not much, he swore ; his burr became a thistle,
To sting the Boches. It was at least a mile
I carried him. And ever he would whistle,
Then stiffened into stillness with a smile.

LIKE devils, led by devils, over the wall
They clambered, some were singing, as they scaled,
" Marching through Georgia," which had never failed—
And should not now—as with a trumpet call,
To rouse the men behind them. As they fall,
Some cheered, some sang, but never one that wailed,
And one there was a bloody banner trailed ;
And all for France and Freedom suffered all.

For they had come out of the world's far ends,
And one great cause had made of strangers friends.
Whom many tongues divided now are one
In silence ; all were loyal to the light,
And gave their lives as stars that die in night
Surrender up their glory to the sun.

ON AN INCIDENT TOLD ME BY DAVID BISPHAM

WITH rolled-up sleeves, he sterilized the knife,
And waited the next patient, who was brought
Upon a stretcher : one who vainly sought,
Fighting for France, to fling away his life,
Where with red fury seethed the battle strife,
And there they found him, wounded. Cool as thought,
The bearded surgeon, who that day had wrought
A hundred miracles with his one knife.
Now all was ready. " No, I'll have to stop
For lack of ether. Not a tiny drop ! "
Then like a vision of ethereal grace
Over the soldier leaned a lovely face :
Her cheek on his ! The throb became a thrill,
While with proud haste the surgeon proved his skill.

To this dead world shal there be one to speak
As once to Lazarus, laid in the grave,
One said " Arise ! " What Saviour man shall save,
Since now for Faith the living are too weak ?
What loving shepherd shall in darkness seek
For his poor sheep ? What spirit walk the wave ?
Who shall bring freedom to the hopeless slave ?
Who shame the proud by his example meek ?

Unless one save us, we are lost, undone ?
No hope have we who look upon the sun ;
And on Night's cheek the moon hangs like a tear.
Help us, O God ! O help us in our need ;
For we are comfortless. O Father heed :
Man is the devil whom Thy children fear.

A WOUNDED Turk bore gently in his arms
A dying Englishman. And Christ in Heaven
Almost repenting that He had forgiven
The world for sin, smiling, hushed the alarms
Of angels mourning for that hell of harms.
He had not smiled for years in His own Heaven.
There was so much to weep for, and His riven
Side would but bleed—and as His gesture charms
The tears from all the faces of the blest,
His accents had a sweetness never known.
Then unto them He said with such a tone
It seemed a flowing river of pure rest
In every breast : " Now am I satisfied ;
For it was not in vain that there I died."

PRUSSIANS rejoice. The weight of forty years,
Pushing against the gate of change, at last
Let in the tides of war. And ye who cast
Honour beneath your feet, with scorpion fears
Now lash the nations. Wade through blood and tears
To take your places in the sun, and blast
Belgium away with cannon, till, aghast
At that uproar, the angels stop their ears.
And God himself half wishes He were dead,
Now that He sees your desecrating hands
Ravish and ravage. As the kindled lands
Flare into conflagration till the flame
Blushes the heavens, with despairing shame,
Christ shudders at the world for which He bled.

(117) WHEREWITH SHALL YE BE CLOTHED ?

WHEREWITH shall ye be clothed in that Great Day,
When God the Lord shall armed with justice slay
You with your deeds, ye Germans ? You shall try
In vain your massacres to justify
With devil's logic ; and, although ye pray,
Yet shall ye know your god is but a lie,
And all your power but ashes. Ye shall die,
And all your pomps be blown like chaff away.

Knowledge corrupted you, who, knowing, yet
Were so unwise that any little child
Had taught you wisdom wiser than ye knew.
The rose, the lily and violet,
Content to be but beautiful and mild,
These have a strength that armies can subdue.

A TRUMPET spoke ; it was the judgment horn,
 Which summoned to rejoicings all the just.
 Millions awoke, and from their mortal dust
 Rose to the splendour of eternal morn.
 But some remained in death, and were not born
 Into the light from darkness. Some with lust
 Were chained to matter ; others with distrust
 Were weighed to earth, and others with their scorn.

“ Who are they, Lord,” I heard one angel say,
 “ Who will not leave their Darkness for thy Day ? ”
 And then came answer : “ Those who pity slew
 Can nevermore their mortal souls renew.
 Just is their doom ; who mercy’s way forsook
 Their very names are blotted from God’s book.”

PROSTRATE, before Thee, prone with covered face,
 O Lord of vengeance, weeping nations fall :
 Gloom is their boasted glory, and a pall
 Blots out the sun ; and, drifting from their base
 The anchored hills forget their ancient place.
 Death walks the world, and doomèd cities call
 Out of the flame, and sink to silence : all,
 Granite at dawn, crushed by a grinding mace !

The planet trembles, and her countless dead
 Feed the loud greed of an abysmal grave ;
 And all man’s pride is shaken into dust.
 Great God of Judgment, be Thou more than just,
 Be merciful, and quench Thy lightnings dread ;
 Revoke Thy thunders : save, O Father, save !

MERCY, O God, to Thee I cry, to Thee
 Throned on sublimity, too high for prayer,
 Winged with the whirlwind ; Thou, too great to share
 Earth's littleness, and far too far to be
 Near to man's grief, and to such agony
 As this we suffer, writhing in despair,
 Yet this our sorrow makes me bold to dare,
 Though prone and prostrate here on bended knee,
 Thy silent eminence. O Thou, whose breath
 Breathes in our life, Thy children ; whose chaste fire
 Burns in our hearts, the flame of our desire,
 Behold how men, impatient with slow Death
 Prod him to murder. Then, O God, consume
 These bold idolaters, and bolt Thy doom.

ANSWER, O Europe, that appealing blood,
 Which in their pride by thy oppressors shed
 Cries loud to Heaven for vengeance. Let thy dead
 Become the seed of life. Oh, end this feud,
 Ye warring nations, quell this vulture brood
 In their safe nests ; dethrone them ; from each head
 Pluck the last crown ; and answer red with red,
 And let your wrath come on them like a flood.

Answer with Light that ancient Wrong and dark.
 Arise, ye friends of freedom ; armed with power,
 Tear down the Past and build the Future. Hark !
 Tremble, ye kings, that world-awaking bell
 Ends Time's long midnight. Listen, 'tis your knell:
 Now by your death shall God begin His hour !

THE pregnant sky, become, of death, the womb,
Dreadfully drops wild thunder through the night :
A flash, a roar, and darkness after light,
And on the city falls the crashing bomb.
This was a house, which, now become a tomb,
No longer homes the living. Cold with fright,
The huddled neighbours whisper of the blight
That fell upon sweet children in their bloom.

Horror is dead. We cannot be surprised
Into an exclamation. Savages
Can learn a lesson of the civilized,
And will, hereafter, in their ravages.
Not Spanish cruelty nor Indian kill
Can vie with Prussian Christians when they kill.

WAR, always war, and nothing else but war.
My heart is heavy, and my spirit bowed ;
And overhead I now behold but cloud
Where once I feasted on the evening star.
Faith once so near is far ; oh, very far
Is she I knew, or thought I knew, when proud
Of human progress, in man's praises loud.
I saw for him a future without war.

Then the awakening. It was a dream
Wherein I followed an elusive gleam.
For in this world around me I but see
Men as the bleeding heart of history :
One Age builds up ; another Age destroys ;
And human progress is an empty noise.

(124)

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE

WHEN shall it come, that year of jubilee,
Sung to the hopeless by the seers of old ?
When shall He come in triumph as foretold,
The Prince of Peace to set the nations free ?
For we are bound, and pine in misery,
Whose chains are our own passions. We have sold
Our priceless heritage for drossy gold,
And lost with faith our former liberty.

When shall He come ? When we ourselves unwind
Those coils, the senses, from the human mind.
When man, become as simple as a child,
Shall worship God in spirit and in truth.
Not until Justice rules, with Mercy mild,
Shall Peace return, and earth renew her youth.

(125)

"MAY OF THESE SONNETS"

MAY of these sonnets never one destroy
The life some mother bore with more than pain,
But may this book, though reddened with a stain,
Save, for the moment of his mother's joy
And for her arms, some home-returning boy,
Back from that war where lie so many slain,
So many who come never home again ;—
So many, ah, so many, like her boy,
When they departed, to return no more,
Waving their hands to the receding shore,
Where stood their mothers, with their souls unfurled,
Smiling until one tear drowned all the world.
O soldier, wear these sonnets on your heart,
So they may dull the sharpness of death's dart.

THE songs I sing shall over the dead dark
Of this thy night, O Belgium, climb the sky,
Trailing their tones of triumph. They shall fly
Into the heart of morning like a lark,
Singing of darkness ended, till the hark
Of a new world shall wander up, and cry
Glory to all the future, while, on high,
Carols shall peal of peace. And the loud bark
Of cannon and the clang of girding swords,
With all the clash and clamour of wild war,
Shall soften first to sorrow, then afar
Shall seem a harmony of sweet accords :
A music, like the marching to a throne
Of many heroes, glad with trumpets blown.

A PROPHECY

(From "ARMAGEDDON")

(A SYMPHONIC DRAMA OF EVOLUTION, WRITTEN IN 1911)

To Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd George

SCENE : *Heaven. Enter ZEPHON, the Scout of Heaven*

ZEPHON

JUST as I hither from Orion came,
Upon the last horizon of the earth,
A hand, gigantic, carved of splendour, hung
The future like a painting on the wind.
It was a living picture, where I saw
Colour and form, with correspondent change
Of sound and silence, move like very life ;
And all was personal, delineate
With such succession as in time and space
Makes visible, in action, to the eye,
The passions of the soul. There are no words
Can fitly give that vision wonderful ;
There is no silence can its truth reveal.
Had you but seen as I that living war !
Had you but heard—— !

ANGELS

Tell us, good Zephon.

ZEPHON (*shaking his head doubtfully*)

Ah !

There is no speech——

THE ANGEL WONDERFUL

Let but thine eyes remember,
And I shall flash their vision on the sky.

ANGELS

Now we shall see and hear.

ZEPHON

And I, the while,
Shall try to speak as with a seeing tongue.

ANGELS

Oh, speak thine eyes. (*They see the vision as described.*)

ZEPHON

Upon the West, I saw,
Terribly captained, armies helmed with fire ;
And at their head, the adversary, yea,
The Serpent, the Great Darkness. On they moved,
Their drum, the thunder, sounding dreadfully.
Their trumpets, strident as the voice of war,
Kindled fierce battles in their eyes ; their crests
Nodded with plumes, as panoplied in night,
Their chargers, clad in armour, rank on rank,
They moved, unfearingly, with brazen clang
And rustling braveries. And when they glimpsed
The glowing minarets and mosques of morn,
That white dream-city, pure and golden-towered,
Set like a jewel in the peace of God ;
As they beheld its splendour glassed within
The million-glimmering mirror of the sea,
Their tremorous banners, like a wood of firs,
Flared out in a great wind of whisperings.
And while they feasted on those palaces
Of rose and pearl ; and while with silent greed
They gloated on that gorgeousness of gold,
Their envy found one gesture, and their eyes
Were as the flashing edges of one hate.

ANGELS

What can it mean, this vision ? Shall the Lord
Suffer that army to assail His peace ?

ZEPHON

Then with a shout, that like a flame of sound
Consumed all silence, with a burning shout,
They uttered their defiance to the sun,
So resonant the thunder of their rage,
As if that lion of enormous sound
Poured all his anger in one mighty roar,
That shook the forests of the world. And they,
With sword-arms lifted, brandished in their hands
Perilous brightnesses. The hills of dark
Bristled with menace ; all those ridges gleamed,
Wooded with warriors ; and their spectral shields,
Ghosting the air, were like a march of moons
Glimpsed on the billows of a midnight sea.

ANGELS

Shall God not see them coming ? Shall the bells
Peal out no clang of warning from the towers ?

ZEPHON

Then, in the East, where yet the morning slept,
Came, on the wind, a clear and stirring call,
A glad and rallying cry. And, unsurprised,
Girt for the fray, the armies of the Dawn
Over the valleys pitch their glimmering tents.
Then, for a throbbing moment, by the moat,
The Night curbed its impatience. So it loomed,
Darkling, above the Day, as where some peak
Is pyramided with a million pines.
There, pulsing war, the Terror hugely towered
Into the sky of its own hate ; and seemed

Buttressed by its own shadow, as it paused.
Then, suddenly, unbridled by one breath,
One motion, of their Leader, from repose,
Those myriad cohorts, lashing with their hands,
Spurring their purpose for that fearful leap
Dashed to the conflict. In a whirl of flame,
Pealing defiance, with discordant cries,
League after league they lengthened down the air ;
And, rushing together, like an avalanche,
Sweep down the slopes of darkness.

ANGELS

Help us, God !

ZEPHON

Then call and answer, hail and challenge rang,
With forward shouts of stern command ; and lo,
Unleaguerable ramparts, in the air,
Rose up precipitous ; huge citadels,
Sheer battlements by no imagination scaled,
Whose hearts were thunder spoke in flame ; the walls
Flung out their standards like a wind of stars ;
And out of budded ambush, with a blaze,
Petalled with battles, like an orb of blood,
Burst the red rose of war.

ANGELS

Now we shall see.

ZEPHON

I heard the bugles play, saw armed hosts
From their inaction spring to arms. Upon
Those glimmering fore-lands, in a mist, I glimpsed
Hurries and agitations. On the hills,
The signal-fires, like sisters in the dark,

Beaconed each other, and kept hope alive.
Tower called to tower ; and when the Morning saw
That forward-footed onset of mad war,
Those rider myriads rushing terribly down,
Waving defiance, then, exulting loud,
With shoutings like the battle-cries of gods,
Heaven's many-winged, embattled marshalry
Counter that Hell, advancing. I beheld
Millions of spears, millions of quivering spears,
Glitter above the mountains like the bright
Rays of the rising sun ; and then there came
Banners and lifted shields and orient crests,
With tramlings passionate of pitiless hoofs.
Thunder met thunder ; war with wilder war
Grappled in cloudy struggle. And long those hosts,
In doubtful equipoise, hung in the air,
Contending awfully : the horns of Light
And Darkness locked in deadly argument.

ANGELS

How will it end ? We scarce can wait to see.

ZEPHON

And when the Dark, deploying crescent-wise,
Spread out his coils, and crept with stealthy pace
Nearer and nearer to the walls of Light,
Then from the purple bastions of the Dawn
And from the battlements of emerald,
Out of the gates of morning, mailed with gold,
A cloud of angels, like a bright eclipse,
Moved with tremendous majesty. Their shields
Shone in that clamour of relentless war
Like polished silences ; like gleaming pools,
They glittered amid that desert loud with death.
And they, impatient, eager to advance,

Dilate to stature archangelical ;
Angels like Alps, to mighty stature towered :
Sublime, immaculate, like peaks, they shone,
Pavilioned high with glory as they moved,
Majestic, like a march of warrior kings
Along the undimensioned amplitudes.
And where their tossing helmets stabbed the sky,
The zenith bled a firmament of stars.
The throbbing of their waking pinions put
New heart into the wind. And now they stand,
Rooted in stillness ; now, by music, stirred,
Shake out like suns their shields together, all
Crying, as one, a glad and conquering cry.
Their ardency was like the crash of dawn
Upon the mountains. Wroth upon the Dark,
They wreaked dire havoc, warred, and mightily smote.

ANGELS

Now they shall triumph, and the Dark shall end.

ZEPHON

Millions of angels, sworded with white flame,
Made with their spreaded wings a wall of war.
Their fluttering streamers, rose and violet,
As seen afar, were amethyst ; their spears,
Flashings of silver in a flood of gold.
Battles, that flew with banners through the night,
With broadening frontage swept the plain, and then,
Converging swiftly, massed in dense array,
Impetuous, through unimpeding mist,
Shaped like a shining wedge, invasion drove
Into the hordes of Darkness. On they dashed,
Poising their lances on the level wind.
Their motion seemed an immobility
Suddenly hewn from their own massive speed.

Their battle-cries like eagles tore the air ;
Heroic clarions, sounding ; every note
Was as the melting of a hero's heart
To martial music ; and their vast advance
Shattered to shadows that huge bulk of Night,
Crushing the Dark, that crumbled, bleeding dawn ;
Till, where they trampled, to triumphant life
Sprouted a summer of reviving suns.
Death gleamed before, and life, behind them, flamed,
The Dark whirled on before them ; and, behind,
Cloudily rolled the thunder of their speed.
They met, they clashed, they battled in the clouds,
Fearfully feuding in the reddening air,
Which luridly vermilions into mist.

ANGELS

Who shall withstand the armies of the Lord ?

ZEPHON

Then stormily, with unsundered hate,
The re-embattled squadrons of the Dark,
Into that gap surged like a seething flood.
I heard the clang of armour, clash of shields
And shock and clamour ; heard the piercing, shrill
Neighings of frenzied stallions, till a deep
Bellowing roar, as if an earthquake gulphed
All lesser sounds, thundered from void to void.
And now, retreating, lost in its own gloom,
That crescent looked a cloud ; and, with its flags
Windily flaring, there unshaped itself ;
And as that brooding Formlessness made pause,
Ominous, sinister, with silent pace,
Gigantic shadows stepped before, and stood,
With swords of menacing, as if to guard ;
And so stood sentinel, till, from that cloud,

Slowly emerged, as from a horrid sleep,
Malignant, glaring darkness like dead light,
With predatory claws and fangs, and prongs
That darting vividly surprised the air,
Rearing incredibly, with monstrous bulk,
A Dragon, rampant, scaled with armoured hosts.
From its huge maw, it hissed a hell of fire ;
And in that gust, as in a gulf of flame,
Line after line, those angel valours fell :
They were as frost before the summer's breath,
Seeming, as they dissolved to dimness there,
A flake of suns that melted like red snows.
Sword shocked on sword. There was no mercy shown
Unto the starry chivalry of Light ;
There was no pity shown, nor any tear.
In vain their bloody sacrifice, in vain
Their prowess who against the Dragon dashed,
Wave after foaming wave, a sea of lives.
So, as in twilight, now the battle swayed ;
And, so full-balanced, long, in pale suspense,
Stood Good and Evil counterpoised, the while,
Obscured by cloud, the issue hung in Heaven.

ANGELS

Alas ! Alas ! shall none then come to save ?

ZEPHON

Then, in a hush, that like a hurricane
Of silence, stilled those armies into fear,
From out the open portal of the Dawn,
Came like the morning, wonderful to see,
A Presence of such splendour that the sun
Before His look would fade into a moon.
Throned on all eyes, He came ; who, through the air,
Before His chariot, drove the harnessed Heavens,

Studded with pulsing stars. And when He passed,
The gates of pearl blushed into perfect rose.
And He, enskied in His eternity,
Clear-regioned, girt about with glory, moved,
To do His deed of justice. Grand, His mien,
Who, constellated with His Seraphim,
Paused not to parley, but with level eyes
Gazed in the glare of Hell. Still was the land,
And still the sea ; the universe was hushed
Before His advent, seeming, as He came,
Like a great Silence overcoming sound.
Awe went before Him, and His chariot wheels,
Ridden with eyes, flung up a dust of worlds.

ANGELS

He will deliver them and shall not fail.

ZEPHON

Meanwhile the other side, incensed to see
The Lord of Light advancing, from that cloud,
Fuming with fury, sprang, to thwart His aim.
Before their ranks a helmèd Horror rode,
Brandishing high a sword of awful flame,
While his great shield, of midnight blackness, cast
Before his feet a silence as of death.
Dread was his aspect, and the plumes within
His casque of tremblings like a forest waved
Armies of shadows onward. And that host,
Moving as one, were subject to his voice ;
And, as he spoke, impassioned bugles pealed
Echoes to magnify command ; and all
From his tense gesture, arrogant, abrupt,
Darted as darts the arrow from the bow,
Spearing the wind.

ANGELS

Now shall they meet the Light ?

ZEPHON

And still He moved in silence, who, to war,
After Him swept the armed Heavens. He came,
Wheeled by velocities of dazzling speed
That set with eyes gazed distances away.
His hand, the heart of gesture, pulsed command ;
And space was thrilled with Him, whose Holy Name,
Throned on the morning, reigned in living light.
Silent, He came, and spoke not ; and that hush
Throbbled as with unheard thunders, till the worlds
Towards that stillness leaned with bated breath.

ANGELS

What need to speak when Silence is command !

ZEPHON

And then that vision fled into a Voice,
And lo ! I heard a word, immense, sublime ;
And like the voice of vastness was that tone.
It filled the Infinite. And through that word
The meaning shone like sunrise through a cloud.
And at that word of overwhelming sound
The Darkness trembled ; and that word of power,
Orbing the silence, like a golden bell
Pealed " Armageddon " ; and the syllables
Over the nations like an ocean rolled.

ANGELS

What means that word, so wonderful ? Oh, say !

ZEPHON

It was that word, massive with granite strength,
Of majesty impressive, and of deep
Apocalyptic grandeur, wherewith God
Should from His arsenal of anger launch
Triumph against the armies of the dark ;
A word to harbour all the fleets of sound ;
Wherein the thunders might like eagles nest ;
Even such a word, as, wonderfully said,
Ushers into the universe a world.

ANGELS

Armies are in that word, and sounds of war.

ZEPHON

And from that word the Speaker of the word,
As from an urn of plenitude, outpoured
Oceans of power ; and in its echo throbbed
Thunder, the beating of the wings of wrath.

ANGELS

Thunder, the threshing of the flail of God.

ZEPHON

And as that word He uttered, its vast power
Took living shape ; and I beheld an eagle
Poised on the lifted eyelid of the morn,
A militant eagle, whose outspread wings
Measured the width of space. Immensity
Streamed from his mighty pinions ; and his plumes,
Panting 'twixt gold and silver, at each breath,
Sparkled with jewelled firmaments. And fear
Went from that wingèd word, great fear. And when
The Dragon, who exulting oversoon,

Now towered dreadfully above the Light,
Listened God's judging word ; and when he saw
Its tones like bodied thunders, one by one,
From off His promontory anger, step
Over the verge of the world ; and when, aghast,
He saw that sudden eagle waving awe,
Then, in an agony of fear, he roared
Dissonant darkness. And again that Voice
Cried " Armageddon," and the air was stilled.
As if the waves of all the oceans rolled
Into one oracle their mighty tones,
So sounded its deep music through the vast,
And all that multitude, as in a sea,
Were drowned in dread, and waited. All in vain
The Adversary and his banded chiefs,
The Beast and the False Prophet, in their rage,
Usurped that word ; in vain the blustering Beast
Mouthed its grand syllables. Within his hands
The Mountain of its power at once became
A pebble of impotence ; and like a sea
Of roaring turbulence their anger raged.
But, unappalled, over those passions wild,
Floated that eagle like a wingèd Pause.

ANGELS

Oh, great Deliverer, delay not long !

ZEPHON

Then, on His car, loosing His whirlwind steeds,
Most calm of look when most impetuous,
Resolute, stern, and unopposable,
The Lord of Day advanced to meet the Dark ;
And like the lightning ran His Living Word
Before His coming, clearing of all cloud
That way of swiftness where He rode to war.

Legions of suns were marshalled by His look,
Legions of angels, one to every sun.
A thousand, thousand angels filled the air.
They seemed to me like sunbeams in His breath,
His ministers, to execute His will.
His justice was a torrent, dashing down
Millions of angels till they looked a mist.
Armies rushed out of Him, and from His eyes
Sprang battles ; death was on those rebels, when
Out of Him rushed the armies of His wrath.
A tempest was His anger. From His mouth
A sword went forth to slay them ; and He cut
A morning-door through Darkness with that sword.

ANGELS

Now slay, and spare not.

ZEPHON

Trembling, I beheld
A vision of avengers, and a swirl
Of harrying swords ; saw, on the leaguered West,
Hell's restless parapets alive with death,
And lightnings like the dying pangs of Night.
Awe left His eyes and thundered them to fear,
Who long, too long, had camped against God's peace.
Hopeless, they shook, and shivered into flight,
So that their tremblings fed the famished wind.
Before mine eyes, a rush of struggle streamed,
With comings bright and spectral vanishings.
Melting like meteors in their own speed,
That flaming brood of evil, like a sea,
Clamouring, surged before His onset, who,
Leading His legions irresistibly,
Wrought ruinous compulsion. Banners proud,
In blown magnificence of terror, passed,

Rocking like masts upon those billows of war.
Now from the wounded Night there horribly gushed
A darkness like black blood. Their cries were stilled,
And the dull drum throbbed like the heart of pain.
Upon their brows a light one moment gleamed,
Pitiless light, like the last look of God.
Blanched faces momentarily are heaved on high,
Then sink for evermore. A sanguine hue
Rubies that sea, and runs into deep gold.
Disfeathered pinions, helms and brilliant plumes,
With blasted heraldries and shields and spears :
The glorious wreckage of their ruined pomp,
Caught in that flood, drift woefully away.
And where Light met the Darkness foams the Dawn,
That whirling sea of onset tossing the spray
Over God's ramparts.

ANGELS

Victory ! Oh, joy !

ZEPHON

And when the Dragon and his chieftains saw
The vane of victory veer to the East,
Despair found voice, and bitterly they wailed.
Their wails were winds crying against the stars.
Then, crazed and desperate, as with one bound,
That Anarch leaped upon the battle's back ;
And deep into the flanks of darkness drove
His rowels till it bled ; and with its mane
Reined in that plunging panic till it reared.
And now, re-forming for a fatal thrust,
The rallying hells, returning to the field,
Reckless with daring, spend their hoarded ire
In one mad revelry of hate, and hurling
Force after force, and mass on battering mass,
Shattered the ranks defending, till their swords

Hewed out a path of darkness through the day.
The storm went naked. Terror went unclothed.
No shame they knew, who wreaked their lust for blood.
The wicked flashings of their scimitars
Glittered like coiling serpents, while from Heaven
Celestial lightnings flashed like vivid spears,
Searching the heart of Darkness for the Lie.

ANGELS

We thought by now to see the Darkness kneel.

ZEPHON

And He, the Hunter, with unhurried calm,
Stood in that sea of battles like a tower,
In unimperilled brightness ; where the Night,
Wild and resurgent, wave on blacker wave,
Dashed at His peace, stood like a lighted tower,
Unshaken by that tempest. Darkness broke
To whiteness on the Sabbath of His brow.
And as the conflict deepened, in His eyes
Those hosts contending were as shifting clouds
Mirrored in lakes of summer noon. He breathed :
Confounded thrones fell from ambition down,
And kings and emperors were dust. He spoke :
His voice was like a cedar shaking down
Eagles of wrath, that with assailing wings
Waved back the onward darkness till it waned.
Now, pitiless, upon the Dragon's crest,
The unwithholden bolt of judgment fell.
Then rose a cry, a sharp mid-battle cry ;
As if a sword should turn into a voice
It pierced the silence. Staggering, then, the Dark
Reeled from his path ; and, falling, in his rage,
Clutching out wildly, from the Heavens tore
A bough of sky whose flaming leaves were suns.

Mortally wounded, the lost world of Hell
Spouted a cry of crimson. All the vast
Woke at so red a cry. From top to base
God's naked sword of lightning clove the West,
Splitting the Dark ; His breath divided it.
He shore their crests who camped against the Heavens.
The falling sun of battle crushed the Night ;
Evil was crushed ; the very sea was blood,
Was Dragon's blood. And as the East swept on,
He radiated armies. Battles were
The flashings of His eyes. And from the height
That pausing eagle, with its patient wings
Splashed with resplendent galaxies, with screams
Of anger, like an arrow, darted down
Cleaving the heart of Darkness.

ANGELS

Now the end.

ZEPHON

Quailing to see that portent, myriad hosts
Wavered and fled. Some madly rear away,
Plunging like flaring comets through the Night ;
Those comets were like fleeing hells of flame,
Trailing disaster. Some in darkness cower,
And with their wounds conceive eternal death.
So, prostrate to God's primacy, the proud
Repent their braveries, and vaunt no more.
Rebellious stars flung down their swords, and wept
Pale meteors of anguish. Every wrong :
Auxiliary Anarchs of the air,
Enlisted Evils and Oppressions, Kings
And Emperors of Darkness ; every wrong
Flung down its life, and listened with bowed head
For the still stroke of death. And everywhere
Implorings and entreaties, with fierce cries

Of dying execration. Then the Day
Somewhile stood still. To me it seemed He smiled ;
His smile, a dawn in darkness. And behold
The cataract of His anger stood serene,
Frozen in air ; His trumpets all were dumb,
And from His ark of thunder flew a dove.
And as His noble anger was appeased,
And the mild rainbow of His mercy veiled
The torrent of His wrath, that mystic Eagle
Grandly the rainbow in its talons grasped,
And flying swiftly, set it high in Heaven.

ANGELS

Oh, beautiful in mercy and in wrath !

ZEPHON

But still the Leader of that Rebel horde,
Unscathed, breathed his defiance, and he spurned
God's gentle mercy, laughing it to scorn.
And as he dared the Light, his lifted shield
Bared all its nakedness. That baleful shield,
To show a counter-glory to the sun,
Was like an orb of blackness ; and, before,
It cast a shadow like a path to Hell.
Aidless, he stood, unconquered ; and his form
Over his army, like a monstrous crag,
To uncelestial grandeur grimly towered.
They dark in death, he bright alone, who rose
As a high peak springs from a wooded vale.
Proud was that demon's posture while his laugh
Reverberated long and hollowly,
As if the echoes mocked him. Then there came
A bruit of reinforcements, and I heard
A sound of gallopings, as, down the West,
With stormier onset and restrainless rage,

Each on a stallion fleeter than a flame,
A rush of darkneses, with hosting fiends,
Horsed on the whirlwind, brandishing pale glooms,
Swept into view ; and, hotly, in their rear,
On glowing chariots, shapes of angry fire.

ANGELS

We tremble for the issue. Be not long.

ZEPHON

And when, to succour him, those cavalries
And all that countless chariotry, behind,
Wheeled into line and waited his command,
Their Leader, from the crag of his despair,
Flung out his wings ; and, flaming down the sky,
Dashed with those columns at the Day. And now
Was feud yet fearfuller, and war more wild,
Till terror grew more terrible. The Heavens
Shook with that war. He only was not stirred,
Who, Day Incarnate, unbewildered, calm,
Chainless as Love, uncleavable as Light,
Steadied His brave defenders. Round His form,
They stood, full-circle, flashing on the dark
A wall of shields that shimmered like new suns.
And they, together, uplifted by His look,
Heave with the unison of rising waves,
And are not quelled. Then, with redoubled rage,
That Rebel and his minions, with a shout,
Like the death-cry of darkness, frenziedly
Crashing against our army, throng on throng,
With overwhelmingness of onset, crush
The utmost of the angels, till, as one,
From that circumference of raving fiends,
Out of that mist, a million swords of flame
Lunge at God's heart.

ANGELS

Who now shall come to save ?

ZEPHON

Sound held its breath, and while that light intense
Was like a dazzling terror in mine eyes,
Suspense, that quivering bridge 'twixt life and death,
Fearfully swayed ; and lo, when I could see,
I saw Him still unwounded. I beheld
That Hero, while that Hell around Him raged,
Poising His sentence, sheathed, as yet, in power.
I saw Him wave His hand ; and when He waved,
As if a wall rose up to stop the wind,
They stood, and moved no more. Their thunder towered
Before mine eyes, a mountain of dead sound ;
The whirlwind's roar was stilled to quiet stone.
Upon the brink of battle, rearing steeds,
Bridled with breathlessness, stood, hoofs in air.
Their chariots, chilled into instant peace,
Were like a torrent frozen in its fall.
Motionless armies, stayed in mid-career,
Hung in a hush, were painted on the wind.
War from the cheek of Heaven paled to peace ;
And all the loud and violent of tongue
Are stubble and burn, are chaff, and are consumed,
And all is silence. Where the battle raged,
There is no living sound ; the only sound
Is thunder, like an Amen after storm.

ANGELS

Praise to the Hero who hath conquered wrong !

ZEPHON

Even so that Anarch and His armies fell,
Shattered before inevitable law ;

And so the Light, with majesty of power,
Rebuked the Darkness, and compelled his heed.
And then afar arose an uproar, loud
As is the roar of lions in the night.
For now the hells, with ineffectual rage,
Mourning their Leader, baffled in his aim,
Howl in their cages ; and infernal storms,
Beat unavailing wings, while the cold eyes
Of pallid phantoms chill the fevered West.
And oh, exceeding wonderful, I saw
God's angels, countless as the stars, that shine
Never so bright as where the desert brings
No bloom of beauty to make earth more glad,—
God's holy angels, yea, that glorious host,
Like isles of intercession in the sea
Of His vast anger, lovingly implore,
With pleading voices and appealing arms,
For love, more love, and mercy to the lost.
And still they pled. Their pleading did not cease
Till He the Lord, relenting, wroth no more,
Just as the morning deepened into day,
Whispered a heaven to lull those hells to peace.

ANGELS

Now shall hate melt into the arms of love.

ZEPHON

Forgiveness like a golden river streamed
Out of His eyes, who, swift to heal the heart,
Pardoned the Darkness for its long delay.
The Sun pronounced His sentence on the Night,
And it was Morning. Where the whirlwind raged,
Penned in His look, the storms lie down like sheep.
To me, it seemed, love sprang up like a flower
In the dead path the avalanche had swept

So bare of life ; love, like a violet,
Grew in the crevice of His granite will ;
And peace is harvested from war, as when
The sheaves of light are gathered after rain.

ANGELS

Great is the glory which that victor gleans.

ZEPHON

And so, the Reaper, He who once had sown,
Gathered His harvest. With tremendous pomp
That Harvester of triumphs reaped His worlds.
I saw Him there with lofty pity moved,
Binding each sheaf of battles with a smile.
And clement was His whisper as He raised
Out of each universe the dead to life.
Subdued by gentleness, Hells woke as Heavens,
And were surprised to find His wish their will.

ANGELS

When shall we see this prophecy come true ?

ZEPHON

Now, where the hosts of Darkness went to war,
I saw the shining of their moonèd shields
Distilling mildness like the eyes of doves ;
Yea, where that sun of battle blazed, and all
The air was carmine, now there supervened
A lunar stillness where the hosts of peace
Like moon-tranced waters trembled in the wind.

ANGELS

For this, long have we waited.

ZEPHON

To His love,

Seen as a chariot of rosy fire,
He bound His captives, trailing them to Heaven.
He branded them with brightness, and their grief
Trampled to fragrance. All the great of earth
Knelt to His rulership, before whose feet
The proudest kings fall prostrate, as the stars
Their little wills surrender to the sun.
Upon their knees, the worlds adored Him, who,
Exceeding great in glory, great in power,
Was greatest in the greatness of His love.
Love was His will, and knowledge was His light ;
And all the Hells were heavened in His smile.

ANGELS

When shall it come, that white and perfect day ?

ZEPHON

And where the tides of evil ebb'd, I saw
New men in a new world. And, as He passed,
Those who were slaves made cymbals of their chains.
Undungeoned from their durance, free as light,
Rejoicing liberations leaped like lambs :
Pale thralls of passion and the serfs of sin.
To Him, the Lord, all prisons lost their hearts,
And throbb'd no more. A thrill was in the air,
And every wrong was righted in His love.

ANGELS

Oh, day of joy and triumph, come ; oh, come !

ZEPHON

Peace was His coming who went forth in war ;
His words that went as eagles now returned,

Docile and meek, as mild as gentle doves.
He came, and left the Nothingness He passed
Gazing with faces after. Miracles
Rippled behind Him ; deserts at His gaze
Surprised the sun with harvests of delight.
Oh, what a joyous babblement was there !
What bliss ineffable ! I nothing heard
And nothing saw, save joy and only joy.
I saw Him in the forest of their praise
In clearness like the sunlight after cloud ;
I saw Him, by the morning of whose look,
It seemed all men were kindled into kings.
He sunned them with the summer of His eyes,
That planted a new Eden in each heart.
With greetings, salutations, trumpetings,
The King of Glory entered at the gate,
That like a lover took Him in its arms.

ANGELS

We shall be there to meet Him with a palm.

ZEPHON

Though He blazed triumph, yet He shed such peace,
It made a shining path unto His throne.
For He was grandly perfect, grandly pure,
Who was Himself a glorious firmament,
Peopled with constellations of surprise.
That jewel, sparkling in His spirit crown,
Was as the trembling of a thousand stars.
The universe expanded when it felt
Itself contained in Him ; and East and West
Like lovers melted in each other's arms.
The whirlwinds marvelled at His calm, and sleeked
Their ruffled pinions into golden sleep.
The thunder bowed and was a whisper there ;

The lightning veiled her eyes ; and Death for ever
Died in His gaze. Oh, good it was to see
Navies of worlds drop anchor in His peace.
And all adore that Lord of triumphs, who,
Reclaimer of the desert of the soul,
Of Beauty re-establisher, left Hell
A pool of stillness in a plain of song,
And earth left rooted in the love of Heaven ;
And all the stars were sisters in His smile.

ANGELS

To Him the angels bow, yea, all that live.

ZEPHON

With cheers and thundering anthems and the noise
Of many marchings, all the Heavens advanced
To meet the Prince of Peace, the Conqueror.
And each one took a palm within his hand,
And put on wonder for a shining robe,
To meet the King of Glory ; and He came,
With Darkness for His captive. Through each heart
He made his joyous entry. And I saw
How at His passing all the stars were suns ;
They ripened in His look like yellow corn.
The colours put a nobler vesture on :
The red put on the purple like a king ;
In royal tones the purple called for gold.
The words that crossed the threshold of His lips
Lived in the light of their own music ; speech
Went naked in the summer of His smile.
And the horizons were like crystal cups,
Brimmed with His Presence who fulfilled the world.

ANGELS

May we behold the kingdom of His peace !

A VISION

THE PALACE OF PEACE

(August 1913)

Dedicated to Baroness Bertha von Suttner

WEARY of war, earth's nations dreamed of peace,
And lo ! to shrine that dream, where men might see,
They built a temple. Each, to make it fair,
Gave of his love and labour, gave his best.
And when they met to dedicate that shrine,
A hush fell on the world ; and War stood still,
And for an hour he sheathed his restless sword,
And bowed and listened, bowed as one who fears
To hear his doom. And then, as I beheld
The towers of that great Palace to the sky
Rise like a song, I felt as if my soul
Was like an eagle borne above the earth.
The world was as a weight I lost, and so,
Purged of all space and purified of time,
As in one bound I leaped from earth to Heaven :
Yea, as the eagle, avid of the vast,
Whose only song is soaring over song,
Mounts to the stormless ether, where he cools
His burning fever in the Infinite,
And, springing Godward, leaves the fading earth,
Like a tradition far behind ; so I,
Out-fleeing time and spirited through space,
Now lost as suddenly a million leagues
As if I dreamed the distances away.

My sight sat crowned upon a floating throne :
I swept through all the worlds and owned them all ;
They knelt to me, and I commanded them ;
I ruled and they obeyed. Afar I saw

The gleam of the white scythe that mows the earth,
And heard the hush behind the mower, Death.
I heard, the while a silence intervened,
The noiseless sweep of planets through the night ;
And the dim stars, like torches in the wind,
Were swaying lights on ships invisible,
Freighted with destinies. And I knew peace.
And a wind blew that seemed the Will of God.
The skies swept into me like a great wind ;
And I knew liberty. And what before
Was clouded now in clearest light revealed
Its inmost essence, while my spirit heard
A silence eloquent with the unsaid.

My living thoughts were pictured on the air ;
The elements put form and vesture on,
The shadows put on Names. I saw the earth
With all the canvas set of all her sails
Joyfully sailing to her goal ; I saw
The Ages go like argosies to God.
Floating into the sun, those argosies
Melted to golden mist. I saw the Years
Go down like ships below the rim of the world.
Their lifting prows were lightening the dark sea.
I dreamed the way the ships go. I beheld
A myriad fleets faring that ocean vast,
Paving that boundlessness with myriad paths,
Leading to one white shore. Paths everywhere,
And none but leads to God.

I felt my soul
The essence of the All, and knew all truth.
Worlds surged through me as if they were my blood,
My heart was up, and walked upon the wind,
Companion of the morning. One with light,
I was a harp whereon the Heavens played

A cosmic music. And it seemed to me
As if all history, with all its loves
And all its hates, lived in a flash, and died.

Vision invited me, and I beheld
A temple wonderful, not made with hands,
Rise like a hymn of worship. And its chaste
And immaterial masonry, its towers
Of glowing whiteness, and its gates of pearl,
Quivered in skies of opalescent air.
Dome, roof and pinnacles before me loomed,
Immaculate, shaped of marmoreal fire,
Like wonderlands of vision, till they seemed
Ranges of dream, each higher than the last.

With an implicit faith the dome reposed
Upon the sooth-fast columns, whence to God
It flamed with aspiration ; and, around,
Aërial choruses of sister spires
Soared like a psalm of wonder, while the walls,
Shining like crystal, all emitted mind,
Wisdom like light, like perfect light ; and where
The mighty arches towered into the sky
Those arches, motionless, seemed mighty wings
Poised for a flight to Heaven ; and the whole
Was mirrored in the sea of its own light.

The walls were set with windows, that, within,
Coloured with correspondences, transmute
The silent light to music ; singing light
Entered within. Where so those windows tall
Storied the air, I could perceive all Time
Audibly pictured. One, in tint and tone,
The triune graces : sound and colour and form.
And in the spaciousness that from the dome
Through that vast temple like a morning streamed

Stood companies of statues, ministrant,
Chiselled of crystal light, as if they bore
Clear witness to the Truth. For there within
Truth looked on Love till it was Poetry.
And over all, on airy terraces,
A flight of seraphs momentarily ascended,
To dip their plumage in the sun. I glimpsed
The dove-plume sheen of the auroral choirs,
Where seven tiers of angels made on high
A singing rainbow trembling in the wind.
The arching colours were like one grand chord
Swept by an invisible player ; and the light
Proved that the Sun of suns was shining love.

Upon the coigns, archangels trumpeted
Peace to the world ; and like white flame the peal
Forgave the reddened air where battle died.
And by each door two angels stood to guard,
Two angels fair, with morning faces, rose,
Arching vast pinions, and their light was awe.
And, at the altar, like a fervent priest,
The Hieratic Dawn, in silver stole,
With mystic symbols sacrificed the Dark ;
And Day swept in with robes pontifical,
And with a pomp of worship blessed the world.

And of that shrine each soul was as a part,
For man was the foundation ; and the dome,
Filling the Infinite, was spirit fire.
Each glistening spire was as a flame of prayer,
The roof was as the heart is after song.
The pillars were like pauses. All the founts
Spouted celestial imagery, until
Image flashed into image, while around
The golden altars, the grave antiphons,
Opposing theme to solemn counter-theme,

With chant and lutany, moved to and fro,
Making light musical. Their lucent song
Lived to the eye no less than in the ear.
Attuned to adoration, heart and voice
Joined in such harmony, their descant grew
To unimagined grandeur. There I saw
Millions that moved with unanimity
Before a throne of Silence. All, as one,
Singing His Will, their Maker ; millions more,
With melody of cymbal, harp and lute,
Singing His love, their Lover. And the hush
After that music was such perfect peace
That all the Heavens seemed drowned in deeps of God.

And He, the King, summoned the worlds to feast ;
And all obeyed that summons, none refused.
And to His House they came, from near and far,
His House, Eternal, hewn of Day, not like
His House of Time, which hath for tapestries
The rising and the setting of the sun :
But beautiful beyond compare, with walls
Windowed with revelations, wonderful,—
A Palace of white peace ; and lo, that House
Lived with His Presence, who, enthroned within,
Was to that temple like a pulsing heart.

All men were there, all women, every race
And every people. Constellations came :
Heaven's happy brotherhoods, till there were seen
Stars, male and female, families of stars.
The confraternities of Night were there,
The lords of Day, consociated suns.
The Outlaws and the Anarchs of the Dark,
They, too were there, inworlded in His Word.
World after World, some ages past their youth,

Each haloed with its orbit, came to feast,
Feeling more brightly as they grow more dim.
And in the morning splendour of their Host,
None might outshine his fellow. All were there :
The rich, the poor, both young and old. And lo !
The earthly old were young, celestially ;
For like His angels, in God's presence, they
Aged into youth ; while Sorrow, like a child,
Hushed at the heart of Music, fell asleep.
And all met God upon that threshold where
The stranger is the friend. And when they saw
The storied windows, and the pictured walls,
Panelled with holy happenings ; and when
Their harps were swept as by a wind of hands,
They knew amazement such as angels know :
Their wonder was like permanent surprise.

Also the naked came ; and when God smiled,
As with a wedding garment they were clothed.
And then all sang. Their singing was a joy.
They sang the bridal song of wedded worlds.
Oh ! good it was to see the Seraphim
Singing like reeds in that great river of joy.
The music was like God made audible.
The sweetest melodies were mother songs ;
The brightest light the glow of brother eyes,
And when they saw how the last tears of earth
Are the first smiles of Heaven, all that Host
Marvelled to see that magic ; and their bliss
Was like a goblet brimmed with purple wine ;
And all of wonder fled into one word
Shapen for worshipping, when they cried " God ! "

And one, who made a harp of his own heart,
Made Heaven sweeter with a song of earth ;
And in his voice I recognized my own.

And when he sang of time it seemed a tear
Glistened a moment in the Eye of Heaven.
Deep in the groves, celestial nightingales,
Making a Paradise of their own pain,
Singing of sorrow to make sorrow less,
Sounded like liquid echoes of that song.
And they, with throbbing syllables, as sweet
As golden honey in a crystal dish,
Were as the sound of music's beating heart.
And when was seen a soundless rain of tears
Was it for sorrow dying into song?—
Then, with a subtle touch, the player sun
Drew rainbow music from the muted strings ;
As if the music filtered through a cloud
To a clear rain, whereon the young sun played,
As on a harp of colours, perfect praise.
And as those tones, so rich and piercing sweet,
Pulsed through the azure corridors, I saw
That He, the Lord, thereat was strangely moved,
And, of His pain, the hearts of all that feast
Were each a throb, and of His joy a thrill.
And all together chorusing, as wine,
Drink of His presence whom their voices praise.
All laud the consummation, some with song,
And others with their silence ; for to Him
Their sacramental silences were song.

Before the outer gate, where all souls come
Weary from their long pilgrimage, there lay
A pile of burdens ; and the windows there
Were stained with looking on the wars of earth.
And, come within, inbrothered in God's love,
The ancient Anarchs of the Air, and all
Who camped against the Citadel of Truth,
Forgot their rebel violence in peace,
Peace like the heart of rest. They raved no more.

Their wishes were like nestlings in God's will.
And they who once were dumb before the stars,
And who refused their homage to the sun,
Now of that host were loudest in His praise.

Peace was their firmament, and yet was each
Palaced in his own peace. And oft they looked
Through Wonder, like a window into God ;
And oft they listened, as if glad to hear
Dying in God the swan-song of the earth.
The sun that shone there only spirit beamed ;
The light was such as if it loved the sun.
The music cried for very happiness,
And at the height of rapture died of joy.
And there was seen, when song was heard no more,
Midway the court, an irised fountain, where,
Singing her gladness, Music broke her heart.
And in the golden porches of God's House
The worlds went in and out like smiling guests,
Each brighter for the happiness he brought.
And all break bread together and loving keep
One image in the meeting of their eyes :
God in all eyes, and every eye in God !

A VISION OF VICTORY

(From "ARMAGEDDON")

SCENE : *Heaven*

CELESTIAL ANGELS

STROPHE

BEHOLD the Victor, beautiful, who comes
With peal of trumpets and the beat of drums,
Yea, with such pomp of sound,
As when deep oceans roll
Thunder on grander thunder
Upon a gleaming shoal.
Behold that hero, brave,
Cleaving the granite grave
Like a grey mist asunder.
Oh, hear the neighings of the chargers, hear
His tramping marshalry
To tremblings wake the ground.
Oh, hear the shoutings, how the echoes ring !
God's happy warriors, ignorant of fear,
Faithful as Fate, and fairer than the fair,
Each, in his coming, brighter than a star.
Hark ! how they cheer,
As now they near,
Waking the world to wonder.
Oh, splendid is that leaguer ! See, oh ! see,
That wood of banners waving !
That host of captains, and their gentle King,
With arm uplift for saving.
He smiles, as if He found
The shining path to morning. See, oh ! see
With what a march of melody
His soldiery surround

That city men call the soul,
Which like a citadel
Hoards the dim hope of Hell.
Now there is music, as of lights that sing,
Music, and rallying
Of many heroes, coming to their King !
And lo ! in every tower
A bell begins to toll ;
And, hearing the loud clangour of that bell,
The sons of Darkness cower.
I see them rushing to the last redoubt,
Radiant legions ; and their conquering shout
Rolls like the billows. Hear it surge and swell,
Joyful with bugles, jubilant with cheers !
And loudest surely is the voice of Doubt,
As back He comes,
With dreadless drums,
With Death in chains and many captive fears !

ANTISTROPHE

Even so, in War's red regions,
Now God's redeeming legions
Plant high His banner of love,
Hell's battlements above ;
So from their topmost pride
Cast down those ancient towers,
Bristling with terror and hate ;
And chain those evil powers
Till all, so proud before,
Who once His name defied
Shall own Him Conqueror,
And magnify His state.
Earth shall that King adore
Who rules the kneeling skies.
Prone to the morning in His eyes,

Even Darkness owns Him Lord, and dies.
Also the midmost arsenals
Forget their dark foundations, and the gate
Opens its arms, and the last banner falls.

ÉPODE

No more, no more,
The fierce and dreadful playing
Of battle swords ; no more
The thunder and the slaying ;
No more the whirl of spears.
And oh, the music, music !
The glory and the cheers !
And oh, the music, music,
Over the cease of tears !
And oh, the roses, roses
Strewn there before His feet,
Who now in peace reposes,
In shadows cool and sweet !

SPIRITUAL ANGELS (*chanting*)

The moon shall pause in mid-career,
And whisper " He is here."
And the great sun retrace his ancient track,
And blush the news
Out of his heart, to cheer
Old Chaos in his dungeon, drear and black,
Oh, not a star shall reverence refuse,
And not a worm ;
But everywhere,
On earth, in air,
Are visions of glad saving,
Of palms from porches waving
And casements, open to the rising sun.
And not a storm

Glooms on the sea, now gleaming,
After an age of wrack,
With navies of redeeming
And whiter sails ;
While with all-hails
And pæans, that are strangely born of peace,
Young cities to the beaches run,
Beautiful cities, happy with their hands,
Yea, all the waking lands
With greetings in their hands.
And all the seas the happiness prolong
And will not cease
Till like a mighty thunder
Rolls their redoubled wonder
Over the world ; till all the wilds
Are full of leaning listeners that long
For the same song,
Chanting the death of wrong.
And all the winds, while flying,
Each like a singing flame
Or clarion of acclaim,
Joyfully crying
That splendid news :
The glorious victory that is the Child's,
His, without sword,
That gentle Lord,
Whom, for His beauty, with sublime accord,
Both men and angels choose,
For there shall be of welcoming no lack,
But all shall haste
From wave and waste
To hail the King for whom all gates swing back !

TO THOSE LOST AT SEA

Oh, watch no more, lone Mariner,
Upon the ship of souls ;
For hope is dead, and cold and dread
Looms Death above the shoals.
How solemn tolls
That joyless knell, the Judgment bell !
How solemn and how drear !
And it is dark, O Mariner,
And not a star to cheer.

Oh, watch no more, lost Mariner,
For the delaying moon ;
The wind, so wild, that witch's child,
Begins a dirge to croon.
For soon, ah, soon !
The fearful foam, thy cheerless home
Shall be, and thou be still ;
And not a sound, O Mariner,
Shall wake Thy sleeping will.

Oh, watch no more, pale Mariner,
Oh, paler in the deep !
No more thy dream shall send a gleam
Across the wilds of sleep.
And one shall weep,
And she shall pray her heart away
Across the crying wave ;
But from the Dark, O Mariner,
Shall come no voice to save.

IONA

THE young Iona came to court ;
Fair as a rose she was, and bright
Her starry eyes ; as pure her soul
As lily white.

The young Iona served at court
As maid of honour to the queen ;
Most beautiful it was to see
Her face serene.

Alas ! her lord, the fierce-eyed King,
Did hap to see her beauty there ;
And hotly flamed his hand to pluck
That rose so fair.

“ Hear, fair Iona, hear,” said he,
“ Say that to-night thou wilt be mine,
And a crown of gold, with pearls bedight
Shall then be thine.”

“ A crown of gold, with pearls bedight,
I may not wear to grieve thy queen ;
So let thy maid in honour live,
Her face unseen.”

“ Hear, fair Iona, hear,” said he,
“ Say that to-night thou wilt be mine ;
The noblest palace in the land
Shall then be thine.”

“ The noblest palace in the land
Is not for me, but for thy queen ;
So let thy maid in honour live,
Her face unseen.”

"Hear, fair Iona, hear," said he,
"Say that to-night thou wilt be mine ;
The half of all my kingdom, proud,
Shall then be thine."

"The half of all thy kingdom, proud,
Becomes not me, but thy true queen ;
So let thy maid in honour live,
Her face unseen."

"What ! cold Iona," then cried he,
"Dost rashly dare refuse thy King ?
Thee in the river's chilly deep
My slaves shall fling."

"Into the river's gloom, O King,
Thy slaves may fling me, at thy hest ;
Yet in its deep forgetfulness
Is peace and rest."

"Sewn in the dreadful drowning-shroud ;
Thou shalt repent this fatal whim,
Is life with me then worse than death—
Dost thou love him ? "

"The drowning-shroud, O mighty King,
My poor weak body may receive ;
God's angels know my heart, and sure
Shall me relieve."

They sew her in the drowning-shroud ;
It trembles on the river's rim ;
And now the King would give the sign—
Alas for him !

For lo ! from out the summer sky.
Two snowy doves gently descend,
And towards that silent, quivering shroud
Their flight they wend.

Like messengers of hope they light
Upon that shroud, from God came they ;
It opens wide—two doves came down ;
Three fly away.

And lo ! from that dark river rise
Two ravens black—with red eyes, fell ;
Two ravens, plumed with sombre night,
Fly out of Hell.

Oh, fearsome croak, and fearful King !
Oh, sudden swoop and shuddering prey !
Two ravens fierce came out of Hell—
Three fly away !

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

AN ELEGY

HAIL, Lincoln, to thy spirit, upon this day,
Which saw thy birth, and saw in thee a child
Born for a mission beautiful; and laid,
Like the babe Jesus, wrapt in lowliness,
Upon the threshold of a shining year !

Who but his mother round that little head
Glimpsed the pale dawn of glory ? Who but she
Dreamed of a wondrous halo which he wore
And trembling bowed and worshipped ? Who but she
Guessed all around him angels, robed with awe,
And heard a whisper of seraphs ? Ah, she knew !
Knew as a mother knows, without surprise,
Her son was born for saving of the sad !
What though on him shone no discovering star,
Were not her eyes, her mother-beaming eyes,
Yet fairer than the fairest orb in heaven ?
What though to him no pomp of pilgrim kings,
Adoring, doffed the tribute of their crowns,
Was not her homage precious as their gold ?
Thus with the dying swan's wild music, thrilled
With love's prophetic rapture, she foresaw
Him garmented with greatness, saw afar
The future kneel before him. Then a mist
Blotted the sun, and blight fell on her dream,
And she stood weeping in a lonely land.

Bred in a low place, lord of little deeds,
He learned to rule his spirit, and he grew
Like the young oak with yearning for the sky.
Yet on his face was sadness, as if grief
Had chilled his singing childhood, ah, too soon,

Or love with her heart-summer came too late !
So with the world he wrestled for his life
And laboured long in silence, his gaunt frame
Knotted with secret agonies ; and so
Struggled through darkness upward till he stood,
Rugged and resolute, a man of men !

The South was in his blood and kept it warm,
And on his soul the winds of all the North
Beat like a storm of eagles at a crag
And left him granite. Then to his chaste heart
The virgin West sang with a siren's voice
And to her arms allured him, and he gave
His deepest love and all his loyal strength.
Thus with austere devotion he foreswore
Plenty and pleasure, hewing through the wilds
Brightening highways, founding the young state
Upon that rock, the liberty of law.

He was a man, amid the throng of men,—
A simple man ! And though in him was seen
A giant wrestler, strong and grapple-armed,
Mighty in struggle, dauntless, one that loomed
Invincible in battles of debate,—
Yet all who knew him loved him, for he hid
The hero with a smile, and seemed instead
Only a king of kindness, showing thus
Unto the proud the majesty of man,
How more than king to be a common man !

His life was one humility, and though
The heights were his, he lingered in the vales,
Yoked to a lowly service many years,
Then came the call, the loud fierce upward call,
And while the cloudy battle closed around,

While Blue and Gray commingled in a mist
Of glory,—then from his dare-kindled eyes
The eagle stared, unquailing, and his look
Like the resistless lightning flashed and flamed ;
Yea, from his heart as from a scabbard leaped
The hero like a sword, and with one stroke
Freed the last slave, and all the sleeping world
Woke, and with one great voice of wonder cried,
“ This is a Man ! ”

He knew what kindest word
Would quicken hope and hearten the faint cause ;
Homespun his parables from life's rich loom,
Was logical as Nature, and he made
His gentle wisdom wiser with a jest,
While humour like the laughing of the dawn
Gleamed through the cloud that troubled his far eyes.
Some called him homely who forgot to shine,
Who, stooped by a vast burden, yet became
Unto the homeless heart an open home.
And as he walked through dreary human ways
The sad, the poor, the lonely and the lost
Followed his form with long-pursuing love,
And all that saw him marvelled, for they felt
That some dear Christ had sweetened all the air.

Then in that towering moment when he cried,
“ There are no boundaries,” and as he bade
Division cease and battle be no more,
When all the happy, now the nation saved,
Bugled of triumph, as he breathed his calm
“ Let there be peace,” and peace was over all,—
Even then he fell and left us desolate !

But still he lives, for like a banner of gold
His conquering name goes marching on to God ;

Who, though he set in darkness, rose again,
Yea, like the rising universal sun
Summed in one flame the dark-divided stars,—
So on this day, above him, where he sleeps,
Over his grave, united, with one grief,
Lo, North and South clasp their forgetting hands !

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